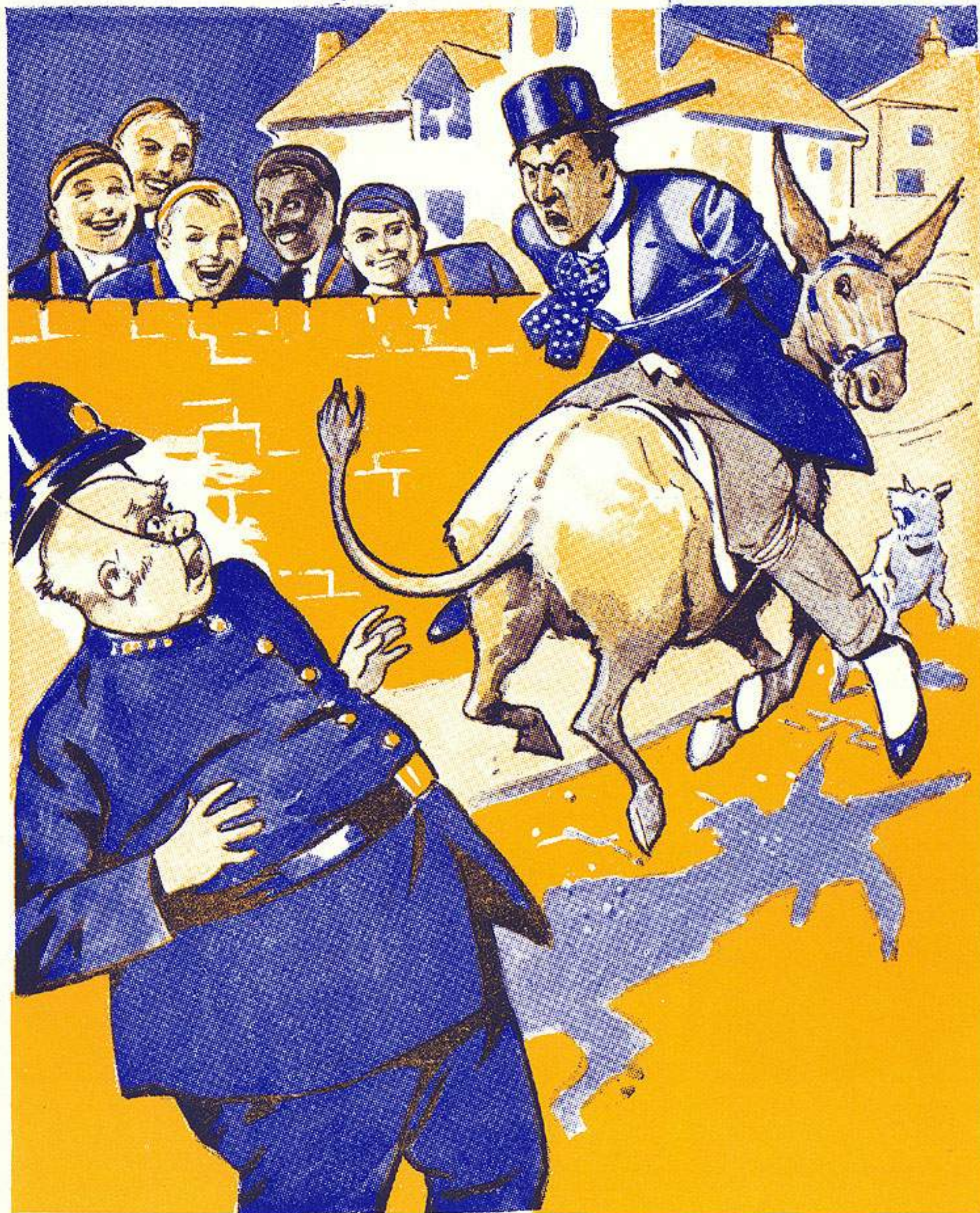


THE BEST SCHOOL YARN OF THE WEEK — INSIDE!

Featuring Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars.

The MAGNET 2^D





Come Into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address:
The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HOW does this strike you, chums? "The Shivering Isle of Mercury!" No, it's not the title of a new serial, but it's an actual island that exists in the Atlantic. I was talking to an acquaintance the other day who had knocked around the world a bit, and he was telling me of this curious place which he came across in his travels. Every wave that strikes the island of Mercury—which is situated off the coast of South-West Africa—makes it shake. The doors and windows of the shacks are always quaking, and if you leave anything on a table, the chances are that you will find it on the floor when you come back.

For the Island of Mercury is almost honeycombed with tunnels and caves that run in every direction, many of them below the level of the sea. And, as the water rushes in with terrific force, the whole island is shaken to its very foundations. They say that pirates' treasure was hidden in these mysterious caves—but it hasn't been brought to light yet. Search has also been made for diamonds, which are found on adjacent islands, but here again the searchers have met with no success. So there's a chance for some of you adventurous readers. Go to Mercury, and see if you can unearth any diamonds or pirates' treasure.

TALKING about islands, there's A ROMANTIC ISLAND

much nearer home than Mercury. This is Lundy Island, in the Bristol Channel, which is owned by a wealthy man who claims to be "king" of the island. He has his own postage stamps, and actually issued his own coinage, which showed his head on one side, and a sea-bird on the other. As the sea-birds which are found on Lundy Island are puffins, he called these coins "Puffins" and "Half-Puffins." A Puffin was worth a penny. Unfortunately, however, he was fined for "unlawfully issuing tokens," and Lundy Island must now go back to the use of the ordinary coins which we have in England.

Wouldn't you just jump for joy if you could be "king" of an island such as this?

During the war I ran across a fellow whose father was king of a group of islands in the Indian Ocean. These were the Cocos-Keeling Islands, which were settled by Captain J. C. Ross in 1825, and ever since then his descendants have been kings of the islands, which number about twenty, and do a brisk trade in the exportation of coconuts and copra. There is a British wireless station on one of them, and during the war, the German cruiser, Emden, tried to destroy it. Unfortunately for the Germans, however, the operators sent off signals which were picked up by the Australian cruiser Sydney, which hurried along and put "paid" to the enemy cruiser's account.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.

If any of you fellows fancy yourselves as "kings," there are still thousands and thousands of islands in various parts of the globe which still remain uninhabited.

MORE "HOWLERS"

have been sent along to me by several readers. Here is a selection:

"Sunset in the morning is a bad omen."
 "Gladiators give out a great deal of heat."

"A cuckoo is a bird that lays other bird's eggs in its own nest, and viva voce!"

"Barbarians are things put into bicycle wheels to make them run smoothly."

While one boy, in the course of an historical essay, mentioned: "William of the Oranges," and "Cardigan Wolsey."

While we are still in a humorous frame of mind, what do you think of the following yarn? Alan Holbrook, of 10, Beaumont Street, Warrington, Lancs, sent it in, and wins a topping MAGNET pocket-knife for it.



Doctor: "Now, my little man, show me your tongue. Come along now, put it right out. No, farther than that!"



The Little Man: "Please, sir, I can't—it's fastened in at the back!"

I WONDER how many of my chums are interested in

MAKING MODEL SHIPS?

I have just received a most interesting little booklet from the Canadian Pacific Railway, which describes the making of a monster water-line model of their newest ship, the Empress of Britain. The model, which is twenty feet in length, was originally made to be exhibited in last year's Lord Mayor's Show, and was made in six working days. This is something of a record when you realise that the model needed no fewer than 500 turned metal stanchions, 350 tiny window frames, 40 metal ventilators, 22 lifeboats, and numerous other items such as winches, anchors, chains, capstans, and the like. And all of them had to be specially made to scale.

If you are interested in making model ships, you should get a copy of the booklet, which gives many useful hints by experts. You can get it free by writing to C. M. B. Stokes, 62, Charing Cross, London, S.W.1. Incidentally, the Empress of Britain, when she is completed, will be the largest and fastest ship between any two ports of the British Empire, and—my Scottish readers will be glad to know—she is Clyde built, as so many of our finest ocean grevhounds are. I shouldn't

be at all surprised if some of my MAGNET readers are working on her now—for I know I have a number of loyal readers in Clydebank.

Now to our

RAPID-FIRE REPLIES

Why does our hair stand on end when we're scared? (Tom Gibson, of Cheltenham.) There are tiny muscles around the roots of our hair, and whenever these are stimulated—either by fright, or cold—these muscles contract and make the hair stand on end.

A tent-making tip. (R. F., of Sedbergh.) If you want your tent to be light enough to carry around with you "on tramp," you should make it of balloon fabric, which can be bought cheaply at any big stores.

"Which is worth the most—a pound of sixpences, or half a pound of shillings?" (H. D., of Middlesbrough.) You're trying to catch me! Most people would say they are worth the same amount, but the sixpences, being twice as heavy, are worth twice as much.

HERE'S an interesting query. George Harker, of Gateshead, wants to know how it is that we can

USE HEAT FOR FREEZING.

If you pour some petrol on your hand, the heat of your hand will cause it to evaporate, and your hand will feel cold after it. This is the same principle used in refrigerating by means of heat. The material used is liquid ammonia, and this is boiled, or evaporated. In thus giving up heat it is actually cooled, and the effect is refrigeration.

The ammonia is originally gas in water. It is heated and ammonia is given off. This is cooled and condenses to liquid ammonia, which is heated and mixes with hydrogen at a high pressure. It is again absorbed by water, and again heated, going through the same cycle again.

Before getting down to next week's programme, here's a snappy Greyfriars limerick, for which Norman Hardman, of 6, Almo Street, Atherton, near Manchester, will receive a topping book.

Billy Bunter, the fattest of freaks,
 Had expected a P. O. for weeks.
 But instead of a P. O.
 He got Bob Cherry's big toe,
 As witness the mark on his "breeks."

Next week's programme forward!
 Here's a first-rate Greyfriars yarn for you. Frank Richards has put his best into

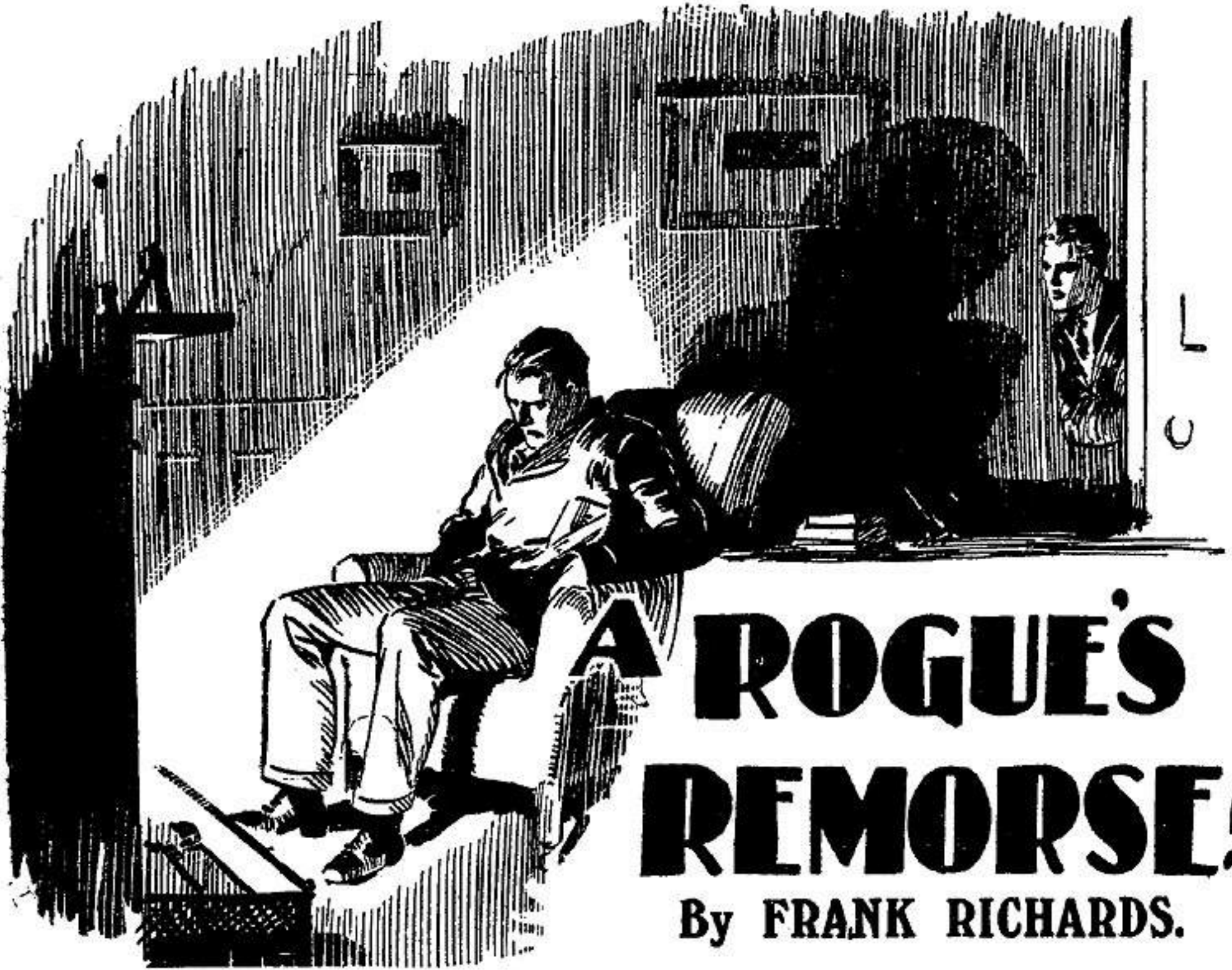
"A KINSMAN'S TREACHERY!"

which is the title of next week's long complete yarn of the Famous Five, and their chums—not to mention the egregious William George, and others of that ilk. You'll enjoy every word of it!

There are more thrills in store for you in "The Island of Slaves," and more chuckles in "The Greyfriars Herald." Further interesting information in "Old Ref's" article, more winning Greyfriars limericks and jokes, and entertaining and informative paragraphs in your Editor's weekly chat.

So look out for next week's issue, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.



A ROGUE'S REMORSE!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

After Lights Out!

CREAK!
Thud!
"Ow!" ejaculated Billy Bunter.

Harry Wharton opened his eyes. So did several other fellows in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars.

It was ten o'clock, at which time of night the Remove had been in bed half an hour, and should have been sleeping the sleep of the just.

Someone, however, was evidently stirring.

The creak of Billy Bunter's bed as he rolled out might not have awakened any of the other fellows. But when Bunter bumped into a chair in the dark and ejaculated "Ow!" a good many fellows awakened.

"Wow!" repeated Bunter.

"What the thump—" began Wharton.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" yawned Bob Cherry. "What's up?"

"What silly idiot's that?" asked Peter Todd.

"I—I say, you fellows, it's all right! I'm not getting up!" gasped Bunter. "I—I'm fast asleep—I—I mean, I'm in bed, you know!"

"You frabjous ass!" said Wharton, sitting up in bed. "What the dickens are you up to?"

"N-n-nothing, old chap!"

"You're getting up for nothing, you frumptious chump?"

"Exactly, old fellow—I—I mean, I'm not getting up! I say, you fellows,

you'd better go to sleep! You'll be sleepy at rising-bell, you know. I'm not getting up! There's nothing to get up for, you know. I haven't got a cake in the dorm."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! If you fellows don't go to sleep you'll be sleepy in the morning."

"You benighted fathead!" said Johnny Bull. "Have you woke us all up because you've got a cake to guzzle in the middle of the night?"

"Nothing of the sort! There isn't

Ruin stares the rascally plotter of the Sixth in the face. Then at the eleventh hour his enemies save him!

any cake. Besides, I'm frightfully hungry—famished!"

"Somebody get out and bolster him!" yawned Frank Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Why couldn't you scoff your cake before you came up to bed, you burbling bandersnatch?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Well, Coker of the Fifth was making a fuss about that cake—"

"Oh, my hat! Is it Coker's cake?"

"No! Not at all!" answered Bunter hastily. "Still, you know what a beast Coker is! I didn't want to argue with him. He had the cheek to come to my study to see if it was there, making out that somebody had pinched his cake,

you know. Luckily, I'd sneaked it up to the dorm—not that it's Coker's cake, of course. You fellows know that I wouldn't touch his cake."

"Who's going to get up and bolster Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I jolly well am!" growled Bolsover major.

There was another creak of a bed as Bolsover major rolled out. It was followed by a squeak of alarm from Billy Bunter.

"I—I say, old chap, d-d-don't get up! I—I say, I'll let you have some of the cake! I say— Yaroooooop!"

Swipe!

Guided in the dark by Billy Bunter's alarmed squeak, Bolsover major put in a terrific swipe with the bolster.

There was a bump as William George Bunter was strewn on the floor of the dormitory.

"Ow! Oh! Oh crikey! Beast! Wow!" roared Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him one for me!" called out Bob Cherry.

"And another for me!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

"And another for me, esteemed Bolsover!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"And another for me, old covvy!" said Tatters.

Swipe! Swipe! Swipe!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow! Wwooop!"

Billy Bunter plunged wildly back into bed.

"Ow! Beast! Keep off!" he yelled. "I'm in bed, ain't I? I—I'm going to

sleep! Ow! I say, you fellows, keep him off! Wow!"

Swipe! Swipe!

"There!" gasped Bolsover major. "Now you keep quiet, you fat frump! You wake me up again, and I'll burst you!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Bolsover major went back to bed.

There was a chortle along the row of beds in the Remove dormitory, and the juniors settled down to sleep again.

In five minutes Billy Bunter was the only fellow who was still awake.

As a rule, Bunter was the soundest sleeper in the Remove. But circumstances alter cases.

Bunter was thinking of the cake. It had been impossible to "scoff" that cake before bed-time. A wrathful Coker was in search of a cake that was missing from his study in the Fifth. Had Bunter been discovered in possession of a cake resembling Coker's, certainly Coker would have jumped to the conclusion that it was his property. And Bunter's cake did resemble Coker's, this being quite unavoidable, as it was the same cake.

But Bunter could be strategic. He had smuggled the cake up to the dormitory, looking forward to a surreptitious feast when the other fellows were asleep. He wanted the other fellows to be asleep when he disposed of it for two good reasons. He did not want them to know that he had bagged Coker's cake, and he did not want to whack it out. The second reason was the more important of the two. It was only a four-pound cake, so there was barely enough for Bunter without whacking it out.

The trouble was that Bunter found it difficult to keep awake. He was frightfully hungry—the thought of the cake made him hungry—but he was also frightfully sleepy.

"Beasts!" murmured Bunter.

He dared not risk turning out again till the other fellows were fast asleep. He resolved to wait till the quarter chimed out from the clock-tower. Fifteen minutes ought to be enough for the beasts.

It was. But, as it happened, was also enough for Bunter. His thoughts of the cake gradually merged into dreams of it as his bullet head rested on the pillow.

The quarter chimed out. But by that time Billy Bunter's deep snore was awakening the echoes of the Remove dormitory.

Bunter slept.

He was dreaming of the cake, and he smiled as he slept.

Slumber reigned in the dormitory. Not only the quarter, but a good many quarters, chimed through the misty night, and the Owl of the Remove was still snoring.

But the cake haunted him. It appeared and reappeared in his dreams.

He awakened at last.

He sat up silently in bed.

Bunter realised that he had nodded off. He supposed that he had nodded off for a few minutes. As a matter of fact, midnight had chimed.

The cake was in his mind at once. Instead of closing his eyes again, he opened them wide. He listened intently, and could hear the steady breathing of many sleepers. A faint sound as of a movement came to him from the next bed. Probably it was only Cholmondeley stirring in his sleep. But Bunter listened with keen attention

before he moved. He did not want another bolstering.

The cake was hidden under the next bed, which belonged to Arthur Cecil Cholmondeley, the new fellow in the Remove, who was called Tatters. With great astuteness, Bunter had not hidden it under his own bed in case of discovery. Had Wingate of the Sixth spotted that cake when he put out the lights for the Remove, Tatters would have been called upon to explain how it came there, not Bunter. This, Bunter considered, was rather deep. Fortunately, the Greyfriars captain had not spotted it. It was there, only waiting to be hooked out and devoured by Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove stirred at last. This time he was not going to give the alarm. Experience is said to make fools wise, so perhaps it had that effect on Bunter. A cat-burglar could not have been more cautious than was Billy Bunter this time.

Without a sound he crept from his bed.

This time he did not bump into a chair. Silent as a spectre he groped through the gloom towards Arthur Cecil Cholmondeley's bed. His fat hands were outstretched before him to grope.

His extended fingers came into contact with something in the deep shadows. It was not a bed and it was not a chair, and for a fraction of a second Bunter wondered what it was. Whatever it was, it moved, and Bunter gave a startled gasp. He had an instant's glimpse of a shadowy face that was white in the gloom, and then a violent shove on the chest sent him spinning backwards.

Bump!

"Ow! Help!" yelled Bunter. "Help! Burglars! Help!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"My only hat!"

"That burbling idiot again!"

"That esteemed and preposterous fathead!"

Every fellow in the Remove dormitory awakened. Bunter was not thinking of caution now; he was not thinking of cake. He was howling with terror.

"Ow! Help! I say, you fellows! Help!" roared Bunter.

"Shut up, you fathead!" yelled Bob Cherry. "You'll have the prefects up here if you kick up that row!"

"Ow! Help! Burglars!"

"Dry up!"

"Wait till I get at him with my bolster!" gasped Bolsover major. "I'll give him help! I'll give him burglars!"

"Yow-ow-ow! Help! Murder! Fire! Burglars! Help!"

A dozen fellows turned out of bed. Peter Todd lighted a candle-end. Three or four fellows thoughtfully clutched up their pillows or bolsters before starting for Bunter.

In the glimmer of the candle the fat junior was revealed sitting on the floor between his own bed and Cholmondeley's, squealing with terror, his fat face white as chalk.

He ceased to yell, however, as the light glimmered out, and the wrathful Removites surrounded him.

He blinked round in the shadowy dormitory with bulging eyes.

"I say, you fellows, keep him off! He knocked me over! Oh dear! It's a burglar! Ow!"

"You fat frump!" snapped Wharton.

"This is the second time you've woke us all up! I'll jolly well——"

"I tell you it was a burglar!" shrieked Bunter. "I ran into him as I was going towards Tatters' bed——"

"What were you going towards Tatters' bed for, fathead?"

"The cake; it's under his bed——"

"I'll give him cake!" hissed Bolsover major. "Let me get at the silly owl! I'll give him something to yell for!"

"Hold on a minute!" Wharton pushed Bolsover major back. "The fat chump looks scared out of his silly wits. Nobody's been here, I suppose?"

"He thumped me over!" gasped Bunter.

"Who did, ass?"

"The—the burglar!"

"You howling chump!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "What would a burglar be doing here? Do you think he was after your trousers?"

"I—I say, you fellows, he—he was there! He was close beside Cholmondeley's bed, and I barged into him!" gasped Bunter through his chattering teeth. "I—I just saw his face, and he hit me——"

"Fathead!"

"My 'at!" said Tatters. "Nobody was 'ere that I know of, you fat idjit! He never woke me, anyhow."

"Nobody was here at all!" grunted Vernon-Smith. "Give the silly ass a pillow!"

"Oh, really, Smithy——"

"Couldn't have been some fellow from another dormitory!" said Nugent.

"It's past twelve," said Harry. "Nobody would be larking at this time of night. The silly ass was frightened by a shadow."

"A shadow couldn't knock me over, could it?" howled Bunter. "I tell you he thumped me and knocked me over."

"Rats!"

"Well, we'll look round the dorm," said Bob Cherry. "If we find a giddy burglar, all right; if not, we'll make that fat chump hop."

"And the hopfulness will be terrific," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The wakefulness in the esteemed witching hour of the night is not the proper caper."

"I say, you fellows, he was here——"

"Bosh!"

"He was close by Cholmondeley's bed——"

"Rubbish!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "I tell you——"

"Save your breath, fatty," suggested Bob. "You'll want it all to howl when we get busy with the pillows."

By the flickering light of the candle it was soon ascertained that there was no intruder in the dormitory. Not that anybody expected to find one. If a burglar burgled Greyfriars he was not likely to seek a junior dormitory in search of plunder. And nobody was likely to come larking from another dormitory after midnight.

The Removites were very soon satisfied that nobody had come into the dormitory. They had no doubt that Bunter had bumped into something in the dark, and that funk had done the rest.

So they gathered round the Owl of the Remove with pillows and bolsters, to hand out the reward he deserved for waking up the whole Form at midnight.

"I—I say, you fellows——" gasped Bunter.

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Give him jip!"

"Give the fat idiot beans!"

"Wallop him!"

"Burst him!"

Billy Bunter's frantic howls bade fair

to wake the House, but the Bounder thoughtfully tied a towel round his mouth. Masters and prefects were not wanted in the Remove dormitory. Under the towel Bunter's vocal efforts were energetic, but muffled.

It was his second bolstering that night. But his last state was much worse than his first. A dozen fellows were busy this time, and they gave Bunter too. They wanted to make it clear to the Owl of the Remove that fellows did not want to be alarmed in the middle of the night, even for the sake of a cake—and they made it quite clear.

"There!" said Harry Wharton at last. "Now go to bed, you fat frump!"

"Ooooooooh!"
"And if you wake us up again, look out!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Woooooooh!"
"I'll put that cake in a safe place," added the captain of the Remove. "It's going back to Coker tomorrow, you pilfering porpoise!"

"I—I say—yow-ow!—it's my cake! I say, you're not going to give Coker my cake—"

Swipe!
"Yurrrrrrrgh!"
"Will that keep you quiet, or do you want some more, Bunter?" demanded Squiff.

"Ow! Yes! No! Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Billy Bunter rolled into bed.

The juniors followed his example. For some time Bunter gasped and spluttered, but at last his voice was heard:

"I say, you fellows—"

"My hat! That villain's beginning again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Will you shut up, you fat freak?"

"I say, you fellows, I'll whack out the cake if you like! It's a lovely cake, made specially by our cook at Bunter Court—"

"Jolly kind of your cook to make a cake for Coker of the Fifth!" remarked Toddy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! It's my cake! I say, I'll whack it out—I mean, I'll let you fellows have half—" Bunter broke off as he heard a sound. "I—I say, is that somebody getting up?"

"It's me!" came Bolsover major's sulphurous voice.

"What are you getting up for, old chap?"

"You'll know in a minute!"

"I—I say— Whoooooop!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Ow! Oh crumbs! Oh crikey! I say, chuck it! Oh lor'! I—I—I say, I'm g-g-going to sleep! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bolsover major went back to bed, after which there was sweet silence in the Remove dormitory. Billy Bunter

did not speak again, neither did he leave his bed to look for the cake. Bunter had had enough.

He forgot his wrongs and woes in sleep at last, and his deep snore once more awoke the echoes. And it rumbled on without intermission until the rising-bell clanged out in the misty morning.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

What's Up?

WINGATE of the Sixth opened the door of the Remove dormitory and looked in. The rising-bell was clanging out, and the Remove were awake, though only Bob Cherry so far had turned out of bed.

"Has any man in the dormitory been out of it during the night, do you know?"

"No fear. I'm sure not," answered Harry.

"Well, I don't see how you can be sure not, unless you were awake," said the Greyfriars captain.

"As a matter of fact, we were woke up twice in the night," said Harry, "and each time every man was present."

Wingate started a little.

"You were woke up twice in the night? How, and why?"

"That ass Bunter thought there was a burglar."

"Oh, really, Wharton! There jolly well was somebody—"



Vernon-Smith thoughtfully covered Bunter's mouth and the Removites got busy with pillows and bolsters. Swipe, swipe, swipe! "Yow-ow-ow!" gurgled the Owl of the Remove.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob, as the captain of the school looked in. "Top of the morning, Wingate! Anything up?"

Wingate's face was grave.

"Turn out, you kids!" he said. "Don't any of you be late for prayers this morning."

"Wouldn't dream of it," said Bob. "But is anything up?"

He stared curiously at Wingate's grave face.

"Yes!" said Wingate curtly.

"Give it a name, then!" yawned the Bounder, sitting up in bed.

Wingate did not give it a name. He looked up and down the dormitory and at the surprised faces of the juniors. It was pretty clear that something was "up," though the Removites could not guess what it was.

"Wharton!"

"Here!" said Harry.

He jumped out of bed.

Wingate stepped into the room. All the Remove were up now, and all looking curious. What might have happened in the night was a mystery to them, but it was obvious that something had happened. Wingate's expression was an indication that it was something serious.

"You'd better tell me about this!" said Wingate shortly. "Bunter!"

"I—I say, it wasn't me!" gasped Bunter.

"What wasn't you, you young ass?"

"Oh, anything—anything at all, Wingate! I—I can assure you that I'm perfectly innocent!" stuttered Bunter. "I—I don't know what's happened, but I never did it, Wingate! I—I should know what had happened if I'd done it, you know, shouldn't I?"

"You young ass! Wharton says you fancied there was a burglar in the dorm. What put that into your head?"

"I—I don't know whether it was a burglar, but it was somebody. I told the fellows there was somebody, and they pillowed me for waking them up—"

"What made you think so?"

"I—I ran into him—"

"Then you were out of bed?"

"Oh, no! I never got out of bed, Wingate! I—I slept soundly all through the night. I never woke up once."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Tell me the truth at once, you born idiot!" snapped Wingate. "It's a serious matter. What did you get out of bed for?"

"I—I just got out!" gasped Bunter.

"I—I heard a—a sound—"

"And you ran into somebody?"

"Yes. Just close by Cholmondeley's bed."

"Did you see who it was?"

"Nunno! I just had a glimpse of his face, but it was too dark to see who it was. He pushed me over."

"It's all gammon, Wingate!" said Bob Cherry. "The fat idiot was frightened by a shadow or something."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Was it one of the other fellows out of bed that you ran into, Bunter?"

Billy Bunter started.

"I—I never thought of that, Wingate. I—I suppose it might have been. Yes, I dare say it was. You beast, Cholmondeley! Why didn't you own up that you were out of bed?" demanded Bunter indignantly.

"You fat hass!" said Tatters. "I wasn't out of bed, not till I got up to lend a 'and pillowing you!"

"Well, it was just beside your bed I

ran into him, said Bunter. "If it was a fellow out of bed, it must have been you!"

"It wasn't anybody, you hass!"

"Did you leave your bed during the night, Cholmondeley?" asked Wingate, with a very keen look at the Greyfriars tinker.

"Only when all the blokes did," said Tatters. "We jolly well pillowed Bunter for waking us all up, 'owling out that there was a burglar."

"It was not you Bunter ran into?"

"No blooming fear!"

"You did not leave the dormitory?"

"No," said Tatters. "Why should I?"

Wingate did not answer that. He turned to Bunter.

"Did you leave the dormitory, Bunter?"

"Oh, no! Not at all! The fact is, I never got out of bed—"

"That will do," said Wingate.

"Wharton, so far as you know, nobody left this dormitory during the night?"

"I'm sure nobody did!" said Harry.

"The surefulness is terrific, esteemed Wingate!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, his dark eyes curiously on the prefect. "But what is the preposterous matterfulness?"

"You'll know after prayers," said Wingate. "I won't ask you any more questions, Bunter. You can explain to the Head presently!"

There was a terrified squeak from Bunter.

"I—I say, Wingate, I—I don't want to see the Head! I—I say, I—I'd much rather not see the Head, Wingate!"

The Greyfriars captain stepped back to the door.

"Don't be late, any of you!" he said.

And he left the dormitory, closing the door after him. Billy Bunter blinked round in great alarm.

"I—I say, you fellows, what's up? I say, they're jolly well not going to put it on me, whatever it was! I never went out of the dorm! All you fellows know that I never went out of the dorm!"

"How should we know?" asked Skinner. "If there's any grub missing I shall feel jolly certain that you went out of the dorm!"

"Beast!" yelled Bunter. "I didn't—I wouldn't—I never—"

"There's something up," said the Bounder, with a whistle. "Prefects don't root round the dormitories at rising-bell for nothing! Somebody's been up to something in the night."

"What on earth can it be?" asked Monty Newland.

"Somebody been out of bounds, perhaps," suggested Snoop. "You been out on the tiles, Smithy?"

The Bounder chuckled.

"Luckily, no!"

"I—I say, you fellows, d-d-do you think they're after Coker's cake?" wailed Billy Bunter. "Fancy all this fuss about a measly cake! I—I say, d-d-do you think the Head will take my word for it that it was my cake? It really was, you know. It was sent from Bunter Court—"

"Can't be Coker's cake, fathead!" said Johnny Bull. "You bagged that before dorm, and something's happened after dorm."

"If—if it's the cake, you fellows will back me up, won't you?" asked Bunter anxiously. "If you all swear that I never had the cake—"

"You fat villain!"

"I—I say, Wharton, the Head will take your word! You tell him, honour bright, that you know for a fact that I never had the cake—"

"But you had it!" roared Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton, I wish you'd keep to the point!"

"Dry up, you fat idiot! It can't be the cake!" grunted the captain of the Remove. "It's rather lucky, you men, that that fat idiot woke the whole Form up twice in the night. Everybody was present each time, and that's good enough proof that nobody went out of this dorm."

"Well, if it isn't exactly proof, it's more proof than the other Forms will be able to hand out," remarked Peter Todd. "The other Forms haven't a burbling bandersnatch to wake them up over a cake."

"I—I say, you fellows, where's that cake? I say, Wharton, where did you put that cake?"

"Find out, fathead!"

"You silly ass!" howled Bunter. "Don't you see that we've got to get rid of the evidence? If they start hunting for that cake, we don't want them to find it in this dorm. We've got to get shut of it at once, before they begin looking. We'd better eat it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In fact, I'll eat it," said Bunter. "You fellows needn't trouble. I don't want you to spoil your brekker. Where's the cake?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That cake's going back where it belongs, fathead," said Wharton, "and they can't be after the cake, you burbling chump! It's something a good deal more serious than a cake, ass!"

"Still, we might as well eat the cake—I mean, I might as well eat it. I'm frightfully hungry!"

A Book-length Yarn for 4d. ONLY!



Stand Firm, the Rebels!

Amazing and unprecedented happenings at Greyfriars School. A tyrant of the worst type takes the place of Dr. Locke as headmaster, and his petty tyranny causes a serious upheaval in the school, with the inevitable climax—rebellion! There are thrills and fun galore in this gripping book-length yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. Told in Frank Richards' most fascinating style. Don't miss it, whatever you do!

Ask also for No. 142:

CHUMS OF THE BACKWOODS

Ask for No. 141 of the

SCHOOLBOYS' OWN Library

At all Newsagents, etc.

4^d

"Kick him, somebody!"
"Yaroo!"

The Remove fellows were dressing in haste. Every man was curious to know what was up. And after Wingate's warning they did not want to risk being late for prayers. There was an unusually early exodus from the Remove dormitory.

Billy Bunter cast a last despairing blink round for the cake before he departed. But the cake was out of sight. For reasons unknown and inexplicable to William George Bunter, the captain of the Form intended to return that cake to the owner. And Bunter, sure that the "fuss" was about the cake, felt that it was hard cheese not to be allowed to eat it, if he was going to be called on the carpet for having bagged it. But there was no cake for Bunter, and he rolled dismally out after the other fellows.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, generally as active as any fellow in the Remove, was very slow that morning. He had not finished dressing when most of the Form had streamed away, and Bunter after them, and his friends waited for him.

"Buck up, Inky!" hinted Bob Cherry. "Mustn't be late for prayers, old bean. Mustn't dodge in at the last minute this time!"

"Looking for a stud?" asked Harry.

"Yes, my esteemed chum."

"I'll lend you a stud, old covey!" said Tatters.

The nabob grinned. He looked round the dormitory. All the fellows were gone now, except the Famous Five and Tatters. Hurree Singh ceased to look for the stud. He stepped to the dormitory door and closed it, followed by astonished stares from his comrades.

"What on earth——" began Frank Nugent.

"We've got to get down, Inky, old man," said Wharton.

"We want to find out what's up!" said Bob.

"The upfulness is probably terrific!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur quietly. "And but for the esteemed and idiotic Bunter, the restfulness might be serious for somebody in this worthy and ridiculous dormitory!"

"But what——"

"Wait a minute, my esteemed chums!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh crossed to Tatters' bed. His comrades could only stare at him in blank amazement. The nabob, with eyes as keen as a hawk's, examined Tatters' bed, and the floor round it, and looked under the bed, while his comrades watched him dumbly, wondering whether the dusky junior was out of his senses. There was a sharp exclamation from the nabob.

His dusky finger pointed to Tatters' pillow.

"Look!"

The juniors looked. On the white pillow-case was a single spot of crimson.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Hand of the Enemy!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stared at the mark. It was a spot of red ink, prominent enough on the whiteness of the pillow-case now that their attention was drawn to it, though no fellow would have dreamed of noticing it before. And now that they noticed it, the juniors did not understand in the least why the nabob was so keenly interested in it.

"Well?" said Wharton blankly. "It's a spot of ink! Red ink! What about it? Going off your rocker, Inky?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh smiled faintly.

"Lend me your ridiculous ears, as Poet Shakespeare remarks!" he said quietly. "The absurd Bunter ran into some person unknown last night!"

"He fancied he did, ass!"

"It was no fancy, my esteemed Bob. As soon as I learned that something had happened in the night, I knew that the absurd Bunter had not fancied that unknown person who was close beside the esteemed Tatters' bed."

"Blessed if I see the connection!" said Bob blankly.

"The things that you do not see, my ridiculous chum, are as numerous as the sands upon the absurd seashore! You will remember that the person was close beside Tatters' bed—not any other absurd bed!"

"What about that?"

"You have not forgotten, my worthy friends, the esteemed Carne, of the honourable Sixth Form——"

The juniors jumped.

"Carne?" exclaimed Wharton.

"The worthy and ridiculous Carne,

**STAND BY
for this week's
WINNING JOKE!**

C. S. Richards, of 47, High Street North, East Ham, E.6, who sent in the following winning ribtickler, carries off one of our **TOPPING BOOKS!**

Mrs. Brown: "I say, Mrs. Smith, your son 'Enry ain't 'all talkative."

Mrs. Smith (proudly): "Yes, I know. You see, 'is Uncle Charlie vaccinated him with a gramophone needle!"

Look lively with your efforts, chums, if you want to win one of these **SPLENDID PRIZES!**

who has been put up to getting the absurd Tatters sacked from Greyfriars by Tatters' delectable cousin, Rackstraw, who——"

There was a moment of silence.

The chums of the Remove had not exactly forgotten Carne of the Sixth and his rascality. But it certainly had not been in their minds.

That Carne, the blackguard of the Sixth, was under the thumb of Cyril Rackstraw, Cholmondeley's cousin, they knew. That Rackstraw had induced him, or forced him by threats, to carry out his dastardly schemes against Tatters they also knew.

They had not forgotten how Hurree Singh had removed a stolen banknote from Tatters' box before it could be found there and a charge of theft fastened on him.

There was no vestige of proof, it was true, that Carne had placed it there. The juniors knew it, as well as they could know anything. But proof was another matter.

They had let Carne of the Sixth know that they knew, and had left him in no doubt on that point. And their opinion was that the wretched fellow had been frightened off.

Certainly nothing had happened for a week since, and the matter was rather relegated to the back of their minds.

Apparently, the nabob had kept it fresh in his memory.

"But—but I don't understand," said Harry Wharton at last. "Something has happened in the night—but we don't know what it was!"

"You don't know, Inky?" exclaimed Bob.

The nabob shook his dusky head.

"The knowfulness is not terrific," he said. "But whatever it is, my esteemed chums, it means trouble for somebody."

"That's so, of course; I could see that in Wingate's chivvy," said Bob.

"But why Tatters?"

The nabob smiled almost compassionately.

"Something has happened in the night, which means trouble for somebody," he said quietly. "And in the night somebody came up here and stopped close by the esteemed Tatters' bed. The connection is preposterous, my worthy chums. The unknown person came here to leave a clue!"

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"There ain't nothing put in my box agin," said Tatters, with a grin. "I keep it locked now, and the key's in my pocket."

"But your esteemed clobber was folded on a chair beside your bed, my worthy Tatters, and something may have been put in your pockets."

Tatters jumped.

"Oh, my 'at!" he ejaculated.

The waif of Greyfriars started to go through his pockets in a great hurry.

His face was quite pale.

"Good heavens!" breathed Wharton.

"Inky, you really think——"

"The thinkfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Singh. "The esteemed Rackstraw desires to disgrace Tatters with his excellent grandfather, Sir George Cholmondeley, and if he succeeds, he will be a rich man instead of a penniless loafer. And the execrable Carne is under his thumb and dare not refuse to carry out his orders. He has tried once with a stolen banknote. Now he is trying again."

"There ain't nothing in my pockets," said Tatters.

The nabob pointed to the spot of red ink on the pillow.

"How did that esteemed spot get there, my worthy Tatters?"

"Blessed if I know!" said Tatters. "A bloke never has any ink in the dormitory. It's jist a mystery!"

"It's jolly peculiar!" said Wharton.

"Even a spot of ink couldn't get here by accident. You think that villain butted in here last night, Inky, to ink Tatters' pillow? Why should he?"

"I surmise, my esteemed chum, that whatever has happened during the night, it will be found that red ink has been spilled!"

"Oh!"

"And a search will be made for any fellow with traces of red ink about him, or about his belongings——"

"Oh!"

"Otherwise, how do you account for a spot of esteemed red ink on the worthy Tatters' pillow? The absurd Tatters knows whether he has ever brought red ink into the dormitory?"

"Course I never 'ave," said Tatters.

"My only hat," said Bob, with a deep breath. "Why, it's as clear as daylight now. It couldn't have got there by accident, so it must have been put there on purpose—and it couldn't have been put there without a reason."

"Exactly!"

"You ought to be a jolly old detective, Inky," said Johnny Bull.

"But—but what are we going to do?"

exclaimed Nugent. "If Inky's right, they'll find that mark, and—and—"

"Forewarned is four-legged, as the English proverb remarks," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. The juniors were too perturbed to smile at the English proverb. They watched the nabob slip the pillow-case off the pillow and fold it and tuck it away under his jacket.

"That's no good," said Bob. "If they make a search and find a pillow-slip missing, they'll jolly well guess why it's missing."

"It will not be missing, my esteemed chum. I am going to find another," said the nabob. "There will be no search till after prayers, and there is lots of time. They will find the esteemed Tatters' pillow in perfect order. But—"

"What next?" asked Bob, with a faint grin.

"There is no ink on the esteemed Tatters' pyjamas—the excellent villain would not risk waking him. But a fellow going downfully from the dorm would put on some clobber. Let us examine the ridiculous clobber of the worthy Tatters."

"Bust my buttons!" said Tatters. "You reely think—"

"The esteemed villain was interrupted by Bunter, so possibly he did not finish his execrable work," said Hurree Singh. "But we cannot make too sure, my absurd chums. The stitch in time saves a cracked pitcher from becoming a bird in the bush."

"Oh, my 'at! Look 'ere!" gasped Tatters.

He held up an inky finger. There was a smudge of red ink on it, from the sleeve of his jacket.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Somebody's been inking this blooming sleeve," said Tatters. "It's still wet! Oh, my 'at!"

"Off with that esteemed jacket," said Hurree Singh. "I will pokefully push it up the chimney. It will not be found there. You have some more worthy jackets, my esteemed chum."

"Good Heavens!" muttered Wharton. There could be no doubt now. A further search revealed no more traces of ink; but the juniors could guess that that was because the midnight prowler had been interrupted by Bunter. They could guess easily enough that he had not dared to pay a second visit to the dormitory to finish his dastardly work. But he had done enough—if this was indeed, as all the juniors believed now, a clue deliberately left to connect Tatters with some as yet unknown delinquency.

Tatters washed the stain carefully from his finger and put on another jacket. The inky jacket was concealed in the roomy old chimney. That was the safest place that could be found for it at the moment.

Wharton's lips were set.

"Inky!" he said. "If you're right—"

"The rightfulness is preposterous."

"Well, that villain's got to be stopped," said the captain of the Remove. "What about going to Quelch now, and telling him the whole thing?"

"Good egg!" said Johnny Bull.

"Can we say that Carne came to this esteemed dormitory last night?" said the nabob gently. "Can we say anything, except that we have found red ink on Tatters? That is what the esteemed beaks will be looking for. They would not believe a word against the execrable Carne without proof—and there is no proof. But they would believe that they had got the esteemed offender."

Wharton clenched his hands.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.

"Something's got to be done," he said. "This can't go on!"

"Quitefully so; but for the present moment it is up to us to frustrate the esteemed knavish tricks. Let us go downfully, my esteemed chums, or we shall be late."

"But 'ow will you change that pillow-case?" asked Tatters. "You can't ask Mrs. Kebble for a clean one without giving the show away."

The nabob grinned.

"All these esteemed things are the same at Greyfriars," he said. "I can change it for one from another bed."

"But that will land the inky one on another fellow!" exclaimed Bob.

"Exactfully!"

"You howling ass, you can't do that—"

"The other fellow will be Carne of the Sixth," said the nabob coolly.

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"As you know, my worthy friends, I am excused from esteemed prayers on account of the worthy differences in our religion," explained the nabob. "While you are at esteemed prayers, and the excellent Carne also, I shall be otherwisefully busy."

"Oh my hat!" gasped Bob.

There was a roar of laughter in the dormitory. Tatters' inky jacket had been disposed of. The pillow-slip was a more difficult matter, as it was certain to be missed if taken away. It had to be changed for another—and the idea of changing it for Carne's struck the juniors as a real shriek.

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Nugent. "Then if that ink is really a clue to something, Carne's jolly old clue will point to himself."

"That is the big idea!" assented the nabob.

The dormitory door opened. Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, looked in. Quelch's face, seldom sunny in the early morning, was quite portentous now. His brows were knitted, his eyes gleamed like steel. As they looked at him the juniors guessed that, whatever was the mysterious happening of the night, it concerned their own Form master. Only a personal matter could have made Mr. Quelch look as he looked now.

"Why are you boys not gone down?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "You will be late for prayers."

"Just going, sir!" said Bob.

"Go at once!"

The juniors left the dormitory, Mr. Quelch following them down the stairs. They hurried into Hall, where early prayers were held at Greyfriars. From that function Hurree Janset Ram Singh was excused, though he did not always take advantage of the leave from prayers. On this occasion, however, he did so, having important business on hand.

While the rest of the school were in Hall with the Head, Hurree Janset Ram Singh slipped away to Carne's study in the Sixth. He was there only a few moments, and then he scudded back to the Remove dormitory. The whole School was assembled in Hall, and the coast was clear—no eye fell on the nabob. He was occupied only a few minutes, then he went along to Hall and waited at the door till prayers were over. After which he slipped quietly in and took his place with the Remove.

VALUE FOR MONEY

THE GEM LIBRARY

READ IT REGULARLY.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

What Happened in the Night!

HARRY WHARTON gave the nabob a quick look as Hurree Singh slipped quietly into his place. The dusky junior dropped one eyelid for a second.

Prayers were over, but the School was not dismissed as usual. All the fellows knew that there was something coming; though almost all of them were quite in the dark as to what it was.

Dr. Locke was looking grave and disturbed. All the Form masters had very grave faces; Mr. Quelch especially was very grim. The Sixth Form prefects, also, were preternaturally solemn. It was obvious that, whatever it was that had happened, it was known to the staff and to the prefects. Nobody else seemed to be "in the know," so far.

Every man present was keenly interested; most of all, six juniors in the Remove. Harry Wharton & Co. waited with almost breathless interest for the Head to speak.

Wharton stole a look at Carne, of the Sixth Form. He was in his place, and he looked much as usual. If Carne had anything on his conscience he was keeping up appearances pretty well. But the captain of the Remove, watching him for a few moments, saw his lips tremble, and saw Carne compress them hard, as if to keep them from trembling. Under the forced calm of his exterior Wharton could guess that Carne was deeply disturbed.

If the as yet unknown happening of the night was a part of the plot against Tatters, Carne had reason to be disturbed. He was a tool in the hands of Cyril Rackstraw, but he was not a willing tool. Only fear for himself could have induced the wretched prefect to carry out Rackstraw's orders.

Vicious folly had placed him in the power of the plotter, and he dared not disobey. But Carne was not wholly bad—very far from it. He disliked the waif of Greyfriars; but of his own accord he would never have dreamed of injuring him by underhand means. And the part he was playing was a constant torment to the miserable Carne.

Wharton's feeling towards him was one of contempt and loathing; but he might have pitied Carne had he known what the senior was feeling like in these moments; had he known what he had felt like while he was carrying out the dastardly scheme dictated to him by Rackstraw. But Wharton did not know, and could not guess, that even while he had stolen to the Remove dormitory in the silence and darkness Carne had almost made up his mind to throw over the whole thing and go to the Head and confess before Rackstraw could betray him. Almost, but not quite! For when it came to the test the wretched fellow realised that fear was stronger than remorse.

The silence in Hall was broken by a low murmur of voices. The School had been told to keep their places; and they waited. Dr. Locke was in low-toned conversation with Mr. Quelch. No one could hear what they said; but all knew that it referred to the communication the Head was about to make to the assembled School.

Excitement was suppressed, but it was at fever-heat. Obviously, something had happened, and, obviously, it was something very serious; nothing in the nature of a jape or a lark.

Coker of the Fifth murmured to his friends that somebody was going to be sacked, and Pottor and Greene nodded.



Ponsonby sprang forward, grasped Bunter, and then beckoned to his chums. "We'll rag him like we did that blackguardly tinker the other day," he said, unaware of the fact that Harry Wharton & Co. were so near at hand.

That was the impression all the fellows had.

In the ranks of the Remove Billy Bunter was blinking at the Head with dire apprehension. Bunter's fat conscience was not clear. Bunter could not help thinking that his raid on Coker's study was at the bottom of all this excitement.

Bunter's fat thoughts were generally concentrated on himself; now more so than ever. And the evidence against Bunter—if indeed all this bother was due to Bunter—still existed in the Remove dormitory! Bunter had wanted to eat the evidence; and he had not been allowed.

It really was hard cheese on Bunter! If they were going to inquire after a missing cake, Bunter would have felt much better with the evidence tucked safely away under his waistcoat; especially as he had not yet breakfasted. Billy Bunter fairly wriggled with apprehension as he glued his spectacles on Dr. Locke's stern face and waited for the Head to speak.

It was not a long pause, but it seemed interminable to the School. They wondered if the Head would ever kick off.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh's dusky face was impassive. In the minds of the other members of the Co. there was, perhaps, a lingering doubt. True, it was impossible to imagine how the stains of red ink had reached Tatters in the Remove dormitory during the night, unless they had been deliberately placed there; and they could not have been placed there without an object. Someone had crept into the dormitory in the hours of darkness to plant that strange clue on Tatters!

With a cool clearness of mind worthy of Ferrers Locke the dusky nabob had worked out his solution of that puzzle.

But there was a lingering uncertainty in the minds of the juniors. If those crimson stains were a clue to the mysterious happenings of the night, Hurree Singh was right; and they had been "planted" on Tatters by Carne of the Sixth. There could be no doubt about that. But were they?

The juniors were soon to know.

Dr. Locke ceased his low-toned conversation with the Remove master. There was a breathless hush as he turned to address the School.

"My boys," said the Head, in a voice which, though quiet, reached to the farthest corner of the crowded Hall. "I am compelled to make an announcement which will, I am certain, shock you all as severely as it has shocked me. Last night a robbery was attempted in the school."

The Head paused, and a pin might have been heard to drop.

"The robbery," continued the Head, "did not take place. It was attempted, but it was a failure. That, of course, makes no difference to the iniquity of the act. Within the walls of this school there is a thief—an attempted thief—who must be found immediately and driven forth in disgrace."

"I told you it was the sack for somebody!" murmured Coker of the Fifth.

"Silence!" called out Mr. Prout.

"During the night," resumed the Head, his voice growing deeper, "some unknown boy visited Mr. Quelch's study. An attempt was made to open a drawer in Mr. Quelch's desk—a drawer in which money is kept. Fortunately, the lock was too strong, and could not be broken. Ample traces remain of the attempt to break it. Some instrument—probably from a boy's tool-box—was used. The desk has been considerably disfigured and damaged, and the drawer partly broken."

"Remove man!" whispered Temple of the Fourth.

"Oh, rather!" murmured Dabnoy.

That, of course, was the impression all through the Hall.

Nobody outside the Remove was likely to know anything about the Remove master's desk in his study. Fellows of other Forms never went there. Remove men were constantly in and out of that study, and had constantly seen the Form master at the desk.

It was probable that hardly anybody outside the Remove knew that Quelch kept money in one of the drawers, and still less which drawer it was. If the delinquent belonged to any other Form he must certainly have done some very careful spying to learn so much about Henry Samuel Quelch's arrangements.

The other Forms were conscious of a feeling of relief. All felt that the matter concerned the Remove. And many glances were turned on the Remove from the other Forms.

The Removites looked exceedingly uncomfortable. Some of them returned glares in exchange for curious glances. Only Billy Bunter gasped with relief. It was not Coker's cake, after all, that was at the bottom of these unusual proceedings.

"The delinquent is here present," said the Head, after a long pause. "I call upon him to stand forward, to confess his action, and to receive the punishment due!"

If the Head expected an answer to that command he was disappointed. Some of the fellows almost smiled. It was asking rather a lot to ask a fellow to stand forward and take the "sack."

"I must add," continued the Head, "that there exists a clue to the wretched offender, and that his discovery is practically a certainty. Let him stand forth, that he may be sent away from this school, amid the scorn and loathing of all Greyfriars boys!"

"No takers!" murmured Herbert

Vernon-Smith; and there was a suppressed giggle in the Remove.

The Head waited.

He waited in vain. No one stirred and no one spoke.

But Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged silent glances, and there was a glimmer in the dark eyes of the nabob. The Head had spoken of a clue to the offender. What was the clue? Six fellows in the Remove thought that they could answer that question.

"Since the wretched offender does not choose to put an end to this painful matter by confession, investigation will proceed," said the Head, his voice growing deeper. "The unknown person who attempted to force open Mr. Quelch's desk upset an inkpot while so engaged. It was an inkpot containing red ink."

"Oh, my 'at!" breathed Tatters.

"This inkpot was standing on the desk, and was apparently knocked over by the boy in question, by accident, while he was attempting to force the lock. Mr. Quelch's desk and the floor adjoining and some papers on the desk have been drenched with red ink. It is scarcely possible that the person himself can have escaped receiving some stains. It is probable that such stains will be found upon his clothes, and probably upon his night attire, and possibly upon the bed to which he returned. Once more I call upon the wretched, unscrupulous boy to stand forward. Discovery is certain, and cannot be averted."

Deep silence.

"Which of you fellows was it?" murmured Skinner, with a grin. "Who's the jolly old burglar?"

"The who-fulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"If Quelch kept a cake in that drawer, I should know who it was!" murmured the Bounder.

"Beast!" hissed Billy Bunter.

"Silence!" called out Wingate.

The Head was still waiting. Now that he had stated that there existed a practically certain clue to the offender, many fellows expected the offender either to own up, or to betray himself by his looks.

But nothing of the sort occurred. The Head waited; and the School waited.

"Very well!" said the Head at last, compressing his lips. "The School will remain here while a search is made in the dormitories."

"I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter.

"Was it you, old fat bean?" murmured Skinner.

Bunter was undoubtedly looking alarmed at the Head's last announcement.

"Beast! I say, that's all rot, you know," said Bunter. "I don't see keeping us here while they search."

"Bunter!" It was Mr. Quelch's sharp voice.

"Oh! Yes, sir! No, sir! Oh, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"I heard your remark, Bunter! For what reason do you object to remaining here during the search in the dormitories?"

"We shall be late for brekker, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I'm hungry, sir! If we wait here we—we shall be late for brekker, sir!" stammered Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, you absurd boy, if you speak again you will be caned!"

"Oh lor'!"

Mr. Quelch moved away, frowning. The juniors grinned at one another.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.

Bunter's remark had apparently, for a moment, caused the Remove master to suppose that he was the culprit. It was rather disconcerting to discover that Bunter's objection to remaining in Hall during the search was only founded on a fear of being late for breakfast.

Tatters was breathing hard, and his face was a little pale. He pressed the arm of the nabob. Several masters were leaving Hall, evidently to conduct the search indicated by the Head. But for Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, Tatters knew what they would have discovered in the Remove dormitory.

Hurree Singh gave him a dusky grin. "Inky, old man—" breathed Tatters.

"The all-serenefulness is terrific, my esteemed Tatters," murmured the nabob.

Tatters nodded.

There was a murmur of whispering in Hall while the search-party were absent. Most fellows expected them to return with the news of a discovery.

If the amateur cracksman had upset an inkpot while at work on Quelch's desk, it was scarcely possible, as the Head declared, that he could have escaped some stains. If he had come down in his pyjamas, very likely his pyjamas were stained with red ink. If he had dressed to come down, his clothes were almost certain to show a stain or two. It was as likely as not that he had transferred stains to his bed when he returned to it. In the darkness, and no doubt in a flurried state of mind, it was more than probable that the rascal had kept some of those tell-tale stains about him. And a single spot of red ink would be enough!

The School waited tensely.

Bunter's misgiving was only too well founded. It was a long wait, and the usual time for breakfast was passing. Most of the fellows gave that little heed. They waited in growing excitement. Dr. Locke had sat down, his face grim and stern. The wait seemed endless to the School, and probably to the Head. But it ended at last.

The search-party re-entered. The buzz died away. Fellows craned their necks to look. Some of them expected to see a stained pyjama jacket, or a pillow, or bolster brought into Hall. But the searchers returned with empty hands.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at Carne of the Sixth. He was watching, with set lips, scarcely seeming to breathe. It was evident that Carne believed that a discovery had been made.

The search-party, which consisted of four masters, came up the Hall in the midst of a dead silence.

Dr. Locke rose.

"You have searched, Mr. Quelch?"

"With the most meticulous care, sir," answered the Remove master. "No such stain has been discovered on any article in any dormitory."

Carne caught his breath.

To the deep and intense disappointment of the school, Mr. Quelch's next words were uttered in an undertone, audible to the Head alone. Fellows fairly strained their ears to hear, but they could hear hardly a murmur. The Head was seen to give a violent start.

Expectation was on tenterhooks. But it was disappointed. Whatever it was the Remove master had communicated to the Head was not in turn communicated to the School. But all could see that it had produced a startling effect on the Head.

"Dismiss!" said the Head.

And the School dismissed, streaming out of Hall in a state of the wildest excitement and curiosity.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Where the Clue Led!

"CARNE!"

"Where's Carne?"

"Who's seen Carne?"

Wingate of the Sixth was inquiring for Carne.

Carne had left his place at the breakfast-table before brekker was over—as a Sixth Form prefect he could do as he liked. Nobody had taken any special heed of that circumstance, except perhaps a keen-eyed dusky junior in the Remove.

The school had come out from breakfast now, and it seemed that Carne was wanted. Wingate was inquiring for him up and down and round about. He asked a dozen fellows one after another if they had seen Carne.

"Esteemed and venerable Wingate, the—"

"You young ass!" The Greyfriars captain turned on Hurree Singh. "Have you seen Carne?"

Hurree Singh smiled his dusky smile.

"The absurd Carne is walkfully peregrinating in the esteemed Cloisters," he answered.

Wingate nodded and cut across to the old Cloisters. Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh bestowed a dusky wink on his comrades.

"The Head wants Carne!" breathed Bob Cherry. "That means—"

"Exactly!" murmured the nabob.

"Esteemed Quelch stated that no red-inky stainfulness had been found in any of the dormitories. The honourable Sixth do not occupy a dormitory. The esteemed stain has been found elsewhere."

"Phew!"

"That is why the worthy Quelch spoke only for the Head's ridiculous ear," murmured the nabob. "He must have been terrifically flabbergasted to find the absurd clue in a Sixth Form room."

"Carne will wriggle out of it," said Johnny Bull. "Red ink couldn't get into a junior dormitory by accident. But in a Sixth Form room it's different; they're studies as well as bed-rooms. There's just room for Carne to wriggle out!" he added, with a grin.

"I'd like to see Carne's face when the Head tells him," murmured Bob. "The dear man is wondering now why Quelch never found that jolly old clue on Tatters' pillow. He will jump when he hears that it was found on his own."

And the juniors chuckled.

"If this doesn't stop the cad nothing will!" said Harry Wharton. "He's up against somebody a bit keener than himself."

"Hear, hear!"

Carne of the Sixth in those moments was in an unenviable mood. He had gone into the quiet old Cloisters to try to think it out.

He knew that he had left a spot of red ink on Tatters' pillow. He knew that a crimson spot on a white pillow could not possibly escape a search. Yet the four masters searching the dormitory had found nothing.

It was inexplicable and alarming.

Obviously they had searched carefully, especially in the Remove dormitory. That dormitory was under suspicion. All the School took it for granted that it was a Remove man who had visited the Remove master's study in the night.

Even Quelch, horrified as he was by

(Continued on page 12.)

"Half-Time" Gossip!



Come on, you soccer enthusiasts, our "Wise Man of the Whistle" is waiting to settle those intricate footer problems for you. Fire in your queries right away.

IT is fairly obvious, as I run through my letter-bag week by week, that many young players of this game of football are worried as to the positions on the field which suit them best. I think it can be said that so far as the great majority of players are concerned, they just drift into this or that place on the field.

When a boys' team is being made up, the question of a surplus of good enough players seldom arises. Usually it is just a case of scraping an eleven together as far as possible, and giving them positions on the field which they fancy. There is no expert to watch the lads—to tell them whether they are, or are not, in the position in which their peculiar qualities or skill will be used to the best advantage.

I am fully convinced in my own mind that

there is many a first-class footballer who has gone through his football career in a position other than that in which he could have risen to even greater heights.

On the other hand, many players who were very ordinary in a position in which they played for a long time became really great when moved to some other position. In this connection I need only mention two striking instances. It is a little time now since Sam Hardy kept goal for Aston Villa, but during the years when he was at his best it was generally agreed that the game had never known a better goalkeeper. Yet it is a fact that Sam Hardy started his professional football career as a centre-forward.

Then there is Howard Baker, the man who keeps goal for the Corinthians. He used to play at centre-half. Sometimes, as I have seen him dashing hither and thither in the penalty area, and showing such power in kicking the ball, I have wondered whether he was wise to take up goalkeeping—whether he might not have become even more famous as a player if he had continued as a half-back.

NOW in regard to this question of the position on the field which a player should occupy, I want to say that I am not greatly in favour of switching about. My advice to the young player is just this:

Find the place best suited to your skill and physical attributes, and make yourself master of the duties of that position.

Having said this, I must now admit that a player's best position can often only be discovered as the result of experiment. So don't be afraid to try your skill in a new position; don't be afraid to make an experiment. It might be for your own good in the long run.

There is plenty of direct evidence from first-class football that a change of position may give a player what can best be described as a new lease of life. As an example of this take "Warney" Cresswell, the Everton full-back. For many years Cresswell was considered essentially a right full-back, and in that position he played for England. I even know people who used to say of Cresswell that he had only one foot—the right foot. During last season and in the early part of this season, Cresswell, as a right-back, seemed to be suffering from a loss of form. He was left out of the side. There came a day, however, when there was a vacancy at left-back in the Everton team. The manager, not knowing quite what to do, put Cresswell in that position in his extremity. And as a left full-back, Cresswell has played some wonderful games for Everton this season, finding, in his new position, the form which he had apparently lost in his old position.

FOOTBALL being a winter game, it necessarily follows that matches have to be played on all sorts of pitches. I may add in passing that it is a long time since the weather provided so much variety as it has done during the present season. I have seen matches played when the mud

has been so thick that the strongest of players could only kick the ball a few yards and could scarcely run at all before the match was finished. I have seen other games played when the surface of the pitch has been like iron, while yet again there have been games when the surface of the pitch has been more like a skating rink than a football ground.

The decision as to the fitness or otherwise of a pitch comes within the jurisdiction of the referee. He is told that so far as League matches and Cup-ties go, he must make every effort to get them through as arranged.

But the referee is not justified in seeing a game through if, in his opinion, it is dangerous for the players to carry on.

THERE are one or two points raised by correspondents in connection with these different pitches, discussion of which may be of general interest. "I was told of a case the other day," writes one MAGNET enthusiast, "on which I should like your opinion." Going on to the pitch to start the game the referee noted that the surface was like iron, and that there were dangerous-looking frozen lumps here and there. Before the kick-off the referee called the players together and said that he would penalise all charging in the course of the match." My good reader wants to know if the referee can justifiably adopt such an attitude?

Strictly speaking, I should say the referee was wrong.

The rule-book says that charging is permissible so long as it is not violent or dangerous. Indeed, the rule-book insists that fair shoulder charging must be permitted.

It is not suggested anywhere that the rules of the game are like elastic—to be altered to suit the pitch, for example.

The referee concerned in this particular case might well be able to defend his action, however. He might say that as, in his view, any and every charge was dangerous on such a pitch, he was wise to tell the players that he would not allow charging of any kind. In my view, however, I think the better way for a referee in such circumstances would be for him to appeal to the sportsmanship of the players something on these lines: "The pitch is a bit dangerous, and in your own interests I advise you to play the game with the minimum amount of charging."

In my experience I have known two sets of players, called upon to play on a frozen pitch, agree among themselves before the kick-off that they would not charge or barge each other.

THE other point raised about difficult pitches concerns the question of the best footgear for the players. This is a delicate problem, and one which can only be decided by a careful study of the actual conditions obtaining. How difficult the question is may be gathered from a recent experience of the Arsenal players. They had to play on a frost-bound ground, the surface of which was very slippery in places. What should the players wear on the soles of their boots?

In order to find out what was best, three pairs of boots were prepared for the twelfth man an hour or two before the game was due to start. And first in one pair of boots and then in the other he was sent on to the field to twist and turn about to see which gave him the best foothold.

Obviously there can be no such "luxury" for the average player in the boys' team. But he can often get over the difficulty in a "cheap" way.

On a hard, slippery ground, take out the ordinary studs and nail bars of felt across the sole of the boot as an alternative. The sole of an old carpet slipper nailed on to the ordinary sole will also prevent slipping.

"OLD REF."

A ROGUE'S REMORSE!

(Continued from page 10.)

the bare idea, could have little doubt that the culprit belonged to his Form. There could have been no lack of care in searching the Remove dormitory. Yet the clue, plain enough to be seen by anyone who was not blind, had not been found!

Carne paced the quiet Cloisters, uneasy, alarmed, wondering.

He wondered whether Cholmondeley might have observed that stain of red ink on his pillow. If he had, he could have suspected nothing, not knowing what had happened in the night. Even if he had suspected, he could not have removed the stain without removing the pillow-case. And a missing pillow-case would have been as certain a clue as an ink-stained one. It would have been obvious why it had been removed and hidden away. That was not the explanation. But what was the explanation? Carne could not guess.

There were fellows in the Remove who knew—or, at least, strongly suspected—his treachery. They had as good as told him so. They had warned him to "chuck it." But they could not have intervened here—so far as Carne could see. They had known nothing of the happening in Quelch's study until the whole School was assembled in Hall; and they had all been in Hall when the masters were sent to investigate. He had had an eye on them, and had noticed that Hurreo Singh had been absent at prayers. But the Indian junior had been in Hall when the Head made his announcement. He had been there with the rest when the search was made.

What had happened? Or, rather, why had nothing happened?

Carne thought and thought, and could see no light.

Why had not the Head ordered the juniors, especially the Removites, to be searched for stains of red ink on their clothes? Carne had naturally expected that to be the next step. But it had not been taken.

And what was it Quelch had reported to the Head, which the School had not been allowed to hear? Carne wondered uneasily.

"Oh, here you are!" Wingate's voice interrupted his troubled meditations. "You're wanted, Carne."

"It's not class yet," grunted Carne.

"The Head wants you in his study." Carne stood quite still. There was a cold chill at his heart; he hardly knew why. What did the Head want him for? What could he want him for?

Surely—surely, that fat fool who had turned out of bed in the Remove dormitory in the night and bumped into him, could not have known who he was. It was impossible. Nothing could be known—nothing! But Carne felt a chill as of ice in his veins.

"I've been looking for you everywhere," said Wingate. "The Head's waiting. You'd better hurry, Carne."

Carne tried to control his voice.

"What does he want—do you know?" he asked.

"No. He asked me to send you to his study, that's all."

George Wingate looked very curiously and oddly at his fellow prefect. The colour seemed to be draining from Carne's face.

"For goodness' sake, Carne, have you been up to something?" exclaimed the captain of Greyfriars. "What are you afraid of. Have you been playing the goat, or what?"

"Not that I know of," answered Carne. He stared at Wingate. "You're not suggesting that I know anything about what happened last night? Are you mad, Wingate?" His voice was shrill.

"Don't be a silly ass," said Wingate. "I wasn't thinking of that, of course."

"Oh!" breathed Carne.

"I mean, if you've been breaking bounds, or—or anything of that kind —" said Wingate. "It's no business of mine, but you'd better pull yourself together before you see the Head. You look as pale as a sheet."

Carne breathed hard and unsteadily.

"Anybody with the Head?" he asked.

"Yes, Quelch."

"Then it can't be a row. The Beak wouldn't have a junior Form master there to rag one of the Sixth."

"I suppose not," agreed Wingate.

"I don't know what he wants you for, Carne. But you'd better not go to him looking scared." Wingate turned and walked away.

Carne walked slowly out of the Cloisters. Slowly he made his way to the House. What did the Head want him for? Had something come to light—of his blackguardly secrets; his secret visits to the Cross Keys; to the races with Rackstraw; his surreptitious dealings with bookmakers? It could not be that. Quelch would not be present for that. Had some of those juniors blurted out their suspicions of him? They would never dare! They had no atom of proof. Yet why did the Head want to see him before class?

Somehow, he preserved a look of unconcern, now that he had time to pull himself together. But his heart was heavy as lead as he tapped at Dr. Locke's door.

"Come in!"

Carne entered.

Mr. Quelch was with the Head. Both masters looked strangely grave. Carne's eye went to the Head's table, on which lay a white pillow-case, with a stain of red ink on it.

Then it had been found, after all. Why had not the discovery been announced in Hall? Why had he been sent for?

"You sent for me, sir?" said Carne, surprised himself by the steadiness of his voice.

He was under control now.

"Yes, Carne," said the Head gravely.

"I have to ask you for an explanation." He indicated the ink-stained pillow-case on the table. "You are aware, Carne, that, as I announced in Hall after prayers, the boy who attempted to break open Mr. Quelch's desk, upset an inkpot containing red ink. I had no doubt that some clue would be found to him in consequence. It has, apparently, been found. But as the matter concerns a Sixth Form prefect, I have decided to conduct the investigation in private. I hope that you may be able to furnish some explanation."

"I—I don't understand, sir," said Carne, in wonder. "How does it concern me, sir, if this clue has been found in the Remove dormitory?"

"This clue was not found in the Remove dormitory, Carne."

The prefect started.

"Then where, sir?"

"In your room, Carne."

"In my room!" repeated Carne, like a fellow in a dream.

"This pillow-case, Carne, has been removed by Mr. Quelch from the pillow on your bed."

"On—on—on my bed?"

"Yes. I desire to know, Carne, how your pillow came to be stained with red ink," said the Head.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Before the Beak I

CARNE of the Sixth stood silent, motionless, stunned. The Head waited for his reply, but he waited in vain. Carne could not speak.

His brain was in a whirl. He knew—he knew that he had left a stain of red ink on Tatters' pillow, that had not been found. He knew, he was certain, that he had carefully removed every vestige of the red ink from himself before going to bed. Yet the ink-stain had been found on his pillow.

It seemed to the wretched fellow that his senses were leaving him. He could not speak. He could only stare dazedly at the Head.

The clue the clue that Rackstraw had so cunningly suggested, and that Carne had so cunningly carried out—had been found. And it had led to Carne.

The study, and the Head's stern face, seemed to swim round him. What did it mean? What could it mean?

The Head's voice broke a silence that was growing painful. Mr. Quelch, his gimlet eyes fixed on Carne, said nothing.

"I am waiting for your answer, Carne," said Dr. Locke. "I hope, I trust, that you are able to explain. I cannot believe that a Greyfriars prefect could be guilty of what happened in this school last night. Yet what am I to think? Speak!"

"I—I—" Carne's voice trailed off.

It had been a cunning scheme—a scheme that seemed as if it could not fail. And he had been careful. Yet with all his care he must have had some of the red ink about him when he went to bed, after that surreptitious visit to the Remove dormitory. The stain spoke for itself.

"Well, Carne?"

"I can't understand this, sir," said Carne. "If—if that pillow-case is from my bed—"

"It was taken from the pillow in your room, Carne."

"Of—of course, sir, I have red ink in my study," said Carne. "I use it for maps sometimes. Some may have been spilt."

The Head glanced at Mr. Quelch.

"After finding this inkstain on your pillow, Carne," said the Remove master, "I examined your study. There is certainly a small bottle of red ink in your desk. But it is securely corked, and there is no trace whatever in the room of ink having been spilt."

Carne stood silent.

"I am quite at a loss," the Head went on, his eyes on Carne. "Had a stain of red ink been found in a dormitory the matter would have been perfectly clear. There could have been only one explanation of this stain. But in a Sixth Form room the matter is different. Such ink as this is to be found in every Sixth Form room. But it is extraordinary—very extraordinary—that an inkstain should be found upon a pillow, and at the very time when such a trace was being looked for in connection with what happened in a Form master's study."

Carne had to say something. He

realised that. He was taken utterly by surprise, and his brain was in a whirl. His fingers had been inky after his visit to the Remove dormitory, and he had washed them with care. Yet, so far as he could see, he must have left some smudge on his hands, which had been transferred to his pillow when he went to bed. That was the only explanation his confused brain could think out. But evidently that would not do for the Head. He tried to think.

"I—I don't quite get on to this, sir," he said, with a panting breath. "I—I am rather surprised that Sixth Form rooms should have been searched at all in connection with such a matter."

"In common fairness, Carne, the search had to be unsparing," said the Head. "But that is not the point. Can you explain this?"

"I—I suppose, sir, that—that I must have had some ink on my fingers without—noticing it—"

The Greyfriars "tinker" suddenly hopped on one leg, clasping the other with both hands and yelling with anguish. Ponsonby, in sheer desperation, had landed a terrific hack on Tatters' shin, and was scuttling away.

"I'm sorry, sir. I made rather a mess of it and threw it away."

Carne was surprised at his own ready glibness.

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes looked more like gimlets than ever.

"That is rather unfortunate, in the circumstances," he remarked. "But if it was thrown into a wastepaper-basket no doubt it can be recovered and examined."

"I threw it into the fire, sir," said Carne, in a dry voice.

"Ah!"

Mr. Quelch uttered only that one ejaculation, and left it at that. The look of relief faded from Dr. Locke's face.

There was a long silence in the study. This time it was Carne who broke it.

"Dr. Locke, I hope I may take it for granted that you do not suspect a Sixth

will be discovered." He glanced uneasily at Mr. Quelch. "A boy in your Form, sir—"

Mr. Quelch's face grew grim.

"The clue upon which Dr. Locke relied has failed, Carne," he said. "It has led—to you! There is no other clue."

Carne felt a suffocating feeling. His eyes dropped before the searching gaze of the Remove master.

Outwardly he was calm. But the fear in his heart amounted almost to physical sickness.

"You may go, Carne," said the Head. The prefect left the study.

There was another long silence after he had gone. The Head looked deeply troubled; the Remove master very grim.

"Carne's explanation must be



"Were you using red ink in your study last evening, Carne?"

There was only one answer that Carne could make to that. A falsehood cost him little when everything was at stake.

"As it happens, yes, sir," he answered. "For what purpose, Carne?"

"I stayed up rather late, sir, finishing a map."

He was glad to see that the Head looked relieved. There was no change of expression on Mr. Quelch's grim face, however.

Mr. Quelch spoke as the Head remained thoughtfully silent.

"Can you produce the map in question, Carne?"

The miserable senior wondered for a dizzy moment whether an old map in his study, which he had not touched for days would answer the purpose. Possibly those gimlet eyes would detect that the ink on it was days old. He dared not risk it.

Form man and a prefect, of the attempted theft in Mr. Quelch's study last night. I cannot think that you suspect me of that, sir."

"No," said the Head, after a long pause, "I cannot, Carne! As I have said, if this stain had been discovered in a dormitory I could have entertained no doubt. But in a Sixth Form room other explanations are possible, and I am bound to accept the one you have given."

Carne breathed deep and hard.

"I am bound to regard it," said the Head, "as a very unfortunate coincidence. That is your view, Mr. Quelch?"

There was a perceptible pause before the Remove master answered. But he nodded assent.

"Yes, sir."

"I need not say, sir, that I know nothing of the matter," said Carne. "I could not imagine why you had sent for me. I hope, sir, that the young rascal

accepted, Mr. Quelch?" said the Head at length.

"I think so, sir."

"The matter is left in a very unsatisfactory state."

"Undoubtedly."

"The culprit must be discovered," said Dr. Locke. "But—"

"But—" said Mr. Quelch.

Carne of the Sixth went down the corridor with unsteady steps. At the corner of Head's corridor a group of juniors stood. The Famous Five watched Carne's harassed face as he came along. He slowed down and looked at them. Why were they there, and what did they know? That was the question that flashed into his mind. Had they somehow turned the tables on him, as he knew that they had done once before? And even as the thought came into his mind he knew by some subtle instinct that it was the truth.

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.



(Continued from page 13.)

He gave them a black, bitter look, and passed on. A chuckle followed him. "Try again!" called out Bob Cherry cheerily.

Carne spun round.

"Cherry! What did you say?"

"Try again, old bean!" answered Bob.

"What do you mean?" asked Carne between his teeth.

"Exactly what I say," answered Bob.

"There's a jolly old proverb, 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again!' Chew on it, old bean."

"No doubt Rackstraw will put you up to another dodge, when you tell him you couldn't get away with this!" said Harry Wharton.

Carne stood rooted to the floor.

"Only bear in mind," said Harry, "that there's a good many eyes on you, and sooner or later you'll be caught in the act. You know what to expect then."

"You—you dare——" breathed Carne.

Wharton laughed contemptuously.

"I dare you to take us in to the Head, and have the whole thing out before him!" he said.

For a second Carne was tempted to take the captain of the Remove at his word. There was no proof—not an atom of proof. But he dared not! He knew that his guilty conscience would never sustain him through such an ordeal. With a face like chalk, Carne turned, and went his way. A scoffing laugh from the juniors followed him, and Carne affected not to hear it. He went—with a fear in his heart that was like a chill of ice.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Red Ink!

"GREAT pip!" ejaculated Loder, of the Sixth.

It was no time or place for Gerald Loder to ejaculate "Great pip!" The Sixth were in their Form-room, in the presence of the Head, who was about to deal with them and Thucydides. Fellows were supposed to be quiet, and grave, and circumspect, in the presence of their headmaster, and if the presence of the Chief Beak had not been sufficient, Thucydides was certainly enough to make any fellow grave. But Loder simply couldn't help it.

He was seated next to Carne. Carne had opened Thucydides—and Loder's glance fell on the book. The pages were spotted and stained with red ink.

School books at Greyfriars, as at most schools, often bore traces of ink. It was rather the rule than the exception in junior Forms. Sixth Form men were supposed to be more careful. But the most careless fag in the Second Form certainly never turned up in his Form-room with his book as inky as Carne's Thucydides at the present moment.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.

And it was red ink!

Red ink was rather in the minds of all Greyfriars men that morning. Red ink was the clue to the perpetrator of the outrage in Mr Quelch's study. And the interior of Carne's Thucydides, as he opened it, was fairly drenched in that fluid.

Loder stared at it blankly.

Dr. Looke glanced round with severity.

"Did you speak, Loder?" he asked in an icy tone.

"Oh, no, sir!" stammered Loder, greatly abashed. "I—I mean—no, sir."

Carne's eyes were fixed on the book. They almost started from Carne's head.

Two or three of the Sixth glanced at the inky book. One or two exchanged curious glances.

Carne's Thucydides looked as if its owner had been handling red ink very carelessly. Carne knew that the book had not been inky when he had last left it in his study.

He sat like one turned to stone.

How he got through morning school Carne hardly knew. When the Sixth went out Loder joined him, as Carne knew that he would. Loder was curious, and he wanted to know.

"That's jolly queer, Carne," said Loder, in a low voice. "You'd better keep that book out of sight, old man."

"Why?" muttered Carne.

"You seem to have been handling a lot of red ink lately," said Loder dryly. "The beaks are looking for a man who's been handling red ink."

"You fool!" breathed Carne. "Do you think——"

"I don't think you burgled Quelch's study—and I suppose you wouldn't have taken Thucydides with you, if you had," said Loder. "All the same, it looks queer. How did your book get in that state?"

"It's a rag, of course!" muttered Carne.

"You mean some fag has inked it?"

"Yes. What else could it mean?"

"Well, it's a pretty queer rag," said Loder. "What are you going to do about it?"

"What can I do? I'm not likely to find out the young scoundrel who did it!" growled Carne.

"If such a thing happened to a book in my study, all Greyfriars would hear about it," said Loder. "If it's a fag rag, your business is to look into it and find out who did it and make him sit up."

Carne did not answer.

"If you don't——" added Loder.

"Well?" snapped Carne.

"Well, if you don't, it will look queer. If you want to keep it dark, you'd better chuck that Thucydides into the fire and get another copy as soon as you can. But I don't see why you should keep it dark unless——"

"Unless what?" hissed Carne.

"Oh, nothing!" said Loder.

And he turned away.

Carne went out into the quad with a heavy heart.

He knew what Loder expected of him—what any fellow would have expected of him. A Sixth Form prefect whose school books were ragged would naturally inquire after the ragger with grim persistence till he found him. But that Carne dared not do.

He knew that this attention came from Tatters' friends in the Remove. They knew what he had done, and they were "rubbing it in."

If he forced them into the open they had no proof to offer of what they knew. But he dared not risk it. Under a villain's dictation, the wretched Carne was acting the part of a villain, but

Nature had not designed him for it. He had not the assurance to carry it through. Indeed, he realised, with a chill at his heart, that if the Remove fellows accused him before the Head, it was more likely than not that he would break down and confess.

He had to let them do as they liked—to affect to take no heed—only hoping that for their own sakes they would at least keep to themselves what they knew.

Yet, strangely enough, even in his terror and dismay, Carne found that the failure of his scheme against Cholmondeley of the Remove gave him a feeling of relief. Somehow, to his own surprise, he was glad that Tatters had not been found guilty and "sacked." He had a dim realisation that, had he succeeded, he would have felt worse than he was feeling now—which was bad enough. He had a haunting feeling that, had all gone according to plan, he might at the last moment have thrown all considerations of safety aside and spoken out.

He passed Mr. Quelch in the quad. He affected not to see him, but he was conscious of a very penetrating glance from the Remove master.

He wondered what Quelch was thinking.

When he came back into the House Walker of the Sixth met him. Walker called to him.

"Message for you, Carne!"

Carne looked round.

"Man rang up on the phone in the prefects'-room," said Walker. "He gave the name of Rackstraw. I took the call, and he gave me a message for you."

"Did he?" muttered Carne.

He knew that Rackstraw had not telephoned; the man would never be such a fool. The juniors were "rubbing it in" again, no doubt using a master's telephone for the purpose.

"Yes. Blessed if I know what he meant, but perhaps you do," said Walker. "He said that if you wanted any more red ink to try again; there's plenty more in Quelch's study."

Carne passed on without a word, leaving James Walker staring.

He went into his study and shut the door. He was trembling in every limb. He looked into the glass and saw a face like chalk.

"This can't go on!" he whispered. "It can't! And I've got to see that villain this afternoon to report! What shall I do? What can I do?"

He slumped into a seat at the table. There was a sheet of impot paper on the table, and on it words had been traced with a brush in red ink:

"CHUCK IT!"

Carne stared at it with haggard eyes.

It was a gibe from the juniors who knew. "Chuck it!" It was good advice, and eagerly enough he would have followed it. But he had placed himself in Cyril Rackstraw's power, and Rackstraw could ruin him at Greyfriars with a word!

He dared not retreat—and he dared not go on! And that afternoon he was to meet Rackstraw!

He dropped his throbbing head into his hands and groaned. What was he to do?

It was said of old that the worm will turn. And Carne was very near now to turning on the man who had led him into folly and was seeking to drive him into crime.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Highcliffe Rag!

THUD! Thud! Thud!
 "Oh dear! Ow!"
 There was a sound of rapid footsteps and gasping breath, and the voice of Billy Bunter was heard. Harry Wharton & Co. came to a halt and looked round.

It was a half-holiday that afternoon at Greyfriars, and the Famous Five and Tatters were taking a little walk abroad. There was no game on that afternoon, and Bob Cherry had proposed a ramble round, with an eye open for Ponsonby of the Highcliffe Fourth. A week ago Ponsonby & Co., of Highcliffe, had ragged Tatters in Friardale Wood, and they had not yet suffered for their sins. So the chums of the Remove rambled through the lanes round Courtfield Common with an eye open for the knuts of Highcliffe.

Then Billy Bunter happened. The juniors heard his terrified squeak before he came into sight.

"Ow! Oh crikey! Wow! Oh dear!" Bunter burst through a gap in the hedge into the lane. He missed his footing on the steep bank, rolled over, yelped, and landed in a gasping heap at the feet of the Greyfriars fellows.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Ow! Ow! Wow!" gasped Bunter. "Ow! Wow!"

Harry Wharton stooped to help the Owl of the Remove to his feet. Bunter yelled.

"Ow! Keep off, you beast! Lemme alone! Ow!"

"You silly ass!"
 "Oh, it's you!" gasped Bunter, blinking at him. "Oh dear! I thought it was those Highcliffe cads! Oh dear!"

Bunter scrambled up and blinked at the gap in the hedge through which he had rolled. Across the field, hidden by the hedge, there came a sound of running feet.

Evidently pursuers were on the track.

"I say, you fellows," gasped Bunter, "stick to me, you know! Those beasts are after me! Oh dear! Ponsonby and Gadsby and Monson! Oh dear! Keep them off!"

Bob peered through the gap in the hedge and grinned. Three figures were coming across the field at a run, evidently in pursuit of Bunter, and evidently unaware that the other Greyfriars fellows were in the lane.

"It's jolly old Pon!" chuckled Bob, turning back to his comrades. "Not a sound! Lie low till they show up!"

"Yes, rather!"
 "The ratherfulness is terrific!"

Billy Bunter ceased to yelp, and chuckled. The cheery Pon seldom lost an opportunity of ragging a Greyfriars man when numbers were on his side. This time he was likely to wake up a hornet's nest.

"I say, you fellows, give them a jolly good ragging!" exclaimed Bunter. "I'll help you—if you hold them!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll jolly well give that beast Ponsonby the licking of his life if—if you fellows will hold him!" said Bunter valorously.

"Get out of sight, you men!" said Harry. "If they spot us, they will sheer off. You stay where you are, Bunter, and let them see you."

"Don't you go too far away!" said Bunter anxiously.

"That's all right, fathead!"

The six juniors, grinning, took cover among the willows and brambles along

the lane. Bunter remained in full view, leaning on a tree and gasping for breath. With so much help at hand even William George Bunter was willing to remain and face the enemy.

The running feet rapidly approached the gap in the hedge. A rather handsome face under an expensive hat looked through the gap, and Cecil Ponsonby of

the Highcliffe Fourth grinned at the sight of the breathless Owl. He saw Bunter—and he saw no one else so far.

"Here he is!" shouted Pon to his comrades.

And he jumped lightly through the hedge, landing in the lane a few feet from Bunter. Monson and Gadsby followed him a few moments later.

The three Highcliffians gathered round the fat junior.

"Caught!" grinned Ponsonby.

"I—I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter.

There was ample help only a few yards away; but Bunter did not feel comfortable.

"Blessed if I thought that fat chump could put on such a speed," remarked Gadsby. "But we've got him."

"We jolly well have!" chuckled Monson.

"I—I say—"

"We'll give him a raggin', like we did that blackguardly tinker the other day," said Ponsonby. "It was really obligin' of you to turn up like this, Bunter, when we were lookin' for a little amusement."

"Oh, really, Ponsonby—"

"Collar him!" said Pon. "We'll sit him down in the ditch to begin with—"

"Yaroooh! Help!"

Billy Bunter roared as the three Highcliffians collared him.

In another minute Bunter would have been sitting in the ditch. It was fortunate for him that the Famous Five were on hand.

But as the merry knuts collared Bunter, there was a rush of feet, and six Greyfriars men surrounded the Highcliffe trio.

"Oh, gad!" gasped Ponsonby.

The Highcliffians released Bunter as suddenly as if the fat junior had become red-hot. They spun round to face the new enemy.

Five smiling faces looked at them, and one frowning face. The latter was Arthur Cecil Cholmondeley's. Tatters had not forgotten his merciless ragging at the hands of the knuts, and his eyes gleamed at Ponsonby with a deadly gleam.

"Quite a surprise—what?" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Fancy meeting you fellows!"

"The surprisefulness is terrific!" chortled Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"He, he, he!" came from Bunter. "I say, you fellows, rag the beasts! I say, shove them into the ditch! He, he, he!"

"Look here—" began Ponsonby uneasily.

Gadsby and Monson cast longing looks up the lane. But there was no chance of flight. The Greyfriars fellows were round them, and escape was cut off.

"We—we weren't going to touch Bunter, really," stammered Gadsby. "Only a lark, you know."

"You weren't going to sit him in the ditch?" grinned Nugent.

"Oh, no! Only pullin' his leg!"

Johnny Bull gave a snort of contempt.

"What's the good of telling whoppers?" he demanded. "You were going to rag that fat ass; and now you're going to get the ragging yourselves."

"And the ragfulness will be preposterous."

"It was only a lark!" said Monson dismally.

"Well, now we're going to lark with you," said Bob Cherry. "We're awfully larkish fellows ourselves. Bag them, you men!"

TOPPING BOOK FOR BIRMINGHAM CHUM!
 For the snappy Greyfriars limerick illustrated herewith, W. Hackett, of 49, Malmesbury Road, Small Heath, Birmingham, has been awarded a splendid Book.



Hunting in the Rockies one day,



Paul Prout caught a rabbit at bay.



He filled it with lead



From its tail to its head,



And said 'twas a grizzly, the jay!

Have you had a shot at winning one of these topping prizes, chum? If not, send in your effort **RIGHT NOW!**

"Old on!" said Tatters. "That rotter Ponsonby is goin' to put up his 'ands! You can rag the other blokes if you like; but I'm goin' to thrash 'im!"

Ponsonby gave him a stare of contempt. Pon was feeling dismayed and uneasy; but he was still the arrogant and supercilious Pon.

"If you think I'd soil my hands on you, you low rotter—" he began.

"You laid your 'ands on me pretty 'ard when you was three to one last week," said Tatters grimly. "Now you can try again, with the other coveys here to see fair play."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

"I'm not goin' to fight you; you rank outsider!" said Ponsonby. "Keep your distance, you bad!"

"Fightin's low!" remarked Gadsby.

"'Cept when you're three to one—what?" jeered Tatters. "Well, I'm goin' to thrash you, Mister Superior Ponsonby, and you can please yourself whether you put up a fight or not."

"Good egg!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll see fair play—and Gaddy and Monson can have front seats—in the ditch—to look on and see fair play, too!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here, I say—leggo!" roared Gadsby, as he was collared and dragged to the ditch across the lane.

Splash!

"Gruurrrrrh!"

Gadsby sat in three inches of water and six inches of mud, which splashed up all round him and over him as he landed there.

Monson followed him the next moment.

"Oh gad! Ow!" gasped Monson.

"He, he, he!" chortled Billy Bunter. "How do you like it, you beasts? I say, you fellows, chuck Ponsonby in, too!"

"Ponsonby is otherwise engaged!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Ready, Pon?"

"No!" said Ponsonby, between his teeth. "I'm not goin' to fight a tinker—a low ruffian off the roads."

"Stow it!" said Tatters. "Put up your 'ands, you funk!"

"Hold on a minute," said Bob solemnly. "If it will comfort you in any way, Pon, I'll explain that our friend Tatters, who was once a tinker, is the grandson of a baronet, a terrifically rich and nobby old gent. His name is Cholmondeley, and he is the heir of Cholmondeley Castle, in Hampshire. The Cholmondeleys were great guns in historical times, while the Ponsonbys were still selling bacon over the counter in village shops. I assure you that you can wash out your aristocratic prejudices; it is an honour and a distinction for a Ponsonby to have his nose punched by a Cholmondeley. Feel better now?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Greyfriars fellows.

Ponsonby did not seem to feel comforted. Possibly he was not worried so much by aristocratic prejudices, as by a more wholesome fear of the hefty tinker's fists in single combat.

"Go it!" chuckled Frank Nugent.

Ponsonby backed away.

Tatters followed him up, with clenched fists and gleaming eyes. The look on Tatters' face rather surprised his comrades. They had never seen him look so grim and determined before.

The Greyfriars "tinker" had had a good deal of chipping in the Remove; and he had taken most of it with cheery good-humour. He had a kind heart and a patient temper; and he had never shown any sign of bitterness.

But undoubtedly he was feeling bitter towards the Highcliffe dandy. Pon's snobbish scorn seemed to have found a chink in his armour.

"You puttin' up your 'ands?" asked Tatters.

"No!" hissed Ponsonby

"Then take that for a start!"

"That" was a smack which rang like a pistol-shot on the face of the dandy of Highcliffe.

The next moment Ponsonby sprang at him like a tiger, and they were fighting furiously.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Foul Play!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stood round in a ring, giving the combatants plenty of room. It was man to man, and the chums of the Remove would have scorned not to give their enemy fair play. If Ponsonby got the best of the scrap, he was free to walk away, without a hand lifted to stop him.

But he did not look like getting the best of it.

For a couple of minutes Ponsonby fought like a tiger, rage supplying the place of courage; and Tatters received some punishment. But he gave as good as he received; and Pon soon sickened of hard hitting at close quarters. As Cholmondeley warmed to the work, Pon cooled, and he cooled more and more till it was a serious case of "cold feet."

But he fought on, for he had no choice. Tatters' blows came thick and fast, and he pressed on as Pon retreated.

Back up the lane went Ponsonby, step by step, Tatters following him up, and the Famous Five keeping pace. Gadsby and Monson, in the ditch, were left at quite a distance.

They took advantage of that circumstance to scramble out, and cut away across the fields. Gadsby and Monson had had enough, and were not disposed to linger for any more. They could not help Pon—the Famous Five would have seen to that. It was man to man, and Pon was left to it. No one heeded Gadsby and Monson; and they vanished over the horizon, glad to get away.

Pon did not even see them go. He had no eyes for anything but the grim, determined face in front of him, and the lashing fists that came home again and again.

The dandy of Highcliffe soon had bellows to mend. Too many cigarettes told their tale now that he needed all his wind.

Back, and back he went, giving ground every moment. But Arthur Cecil Cholmondeley pressed him hard all the time.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry as he moved on. "Is this a scrap, or a giddy procession?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stand to it, Pon!" said Johnny Bull encouragingly. "Dash it all, you're inches taller than Cholmondeley, and older, too! All you want is a little pluck!"

"The pluckfulness of the esteemed Pon is not terrific!" remarked Hurree Singh, with a shake of his dusky head.

Ponsonby cast a wild glance round him. He was thinking only of escape. But the tinker was pressing home too hard.

Tap, tap, tap! came Tatters' fists on Pon's face; and he turned to the fight again fiercely.

But Pon was getting desperate now.

Physically he was, at least, a match for the Greyfriars tinker. As Johnny Bull remarked, all he needed was a little pluck. But Pon's pluck, such as it was, had petered out. A fair fight was not in Pon's line, and when he was driven to it he did not like it.

He made a sort of backward run, and Tatters had to break into a trot to keep within punching distance.

There was a chuckle from the Famous Five.

"This is a jolly old foot-race!" said Bob.

There was a sudden yell from Tatters. "Yoooooop!"

The Greyfriars tinker suddenly hopped on one leg, clasping the other with both hands and yelling with anguish. Pon, in sheer desperation, had kicked, and landed a terrific hack on Tatters' shin.

"Ow!" roared Tatters. "Ow! Oh!" As he hopped and yelled, Ponsonby spun round and darted for the hedge.

"You rotter!" roared Bob Cherry.

He rushed after Ponsonby.

Tatters was quite helpless. That savage hack on the shin had lamed him for the moment.

Fear seemed to lend the Highcliffe dandy wings. He fairly flew through the hedge, and ran across the field like a deer.

"After him!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Run him down!"

"Collar the cad!"

Four of the Greyfriars fellows dashed in pursuit of Ponsonby. Harry Wharton stopped with Tatters. Wharton's face was pale with anger. Even from Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, he had not expected that. He helped Tatters to a seat on the grassy bank beside the lane.

"Hurt, old chap?"

"Ow!" groaned Tatters. "Wow! Oh, bust my buttons! Wow!"

He rolled back his trouser-leg. There was a big black bruise already forming on his shin, and Tatters rubbed it tenderly. His face was almost white with pain.

"The 'orrid rotter!" gasped Tatters. "Who'd have thought it? Kickin' a bloke in a scrap! Oh, my 'at!"

"It's like the rotter!" said Wharton. "I hope the fellows will get hold of him! We'll make him squirm for this, the cowardly rascal!"

He looked through the hedge. The Co. came trailing back after a time. They had not caught Ponsonby. The dandy of Highcliffe had had a start; and he had made the most of it, and vanished across the wide expanse of Courtfield Common.

They gathered round Tatters, sympathetic and exasperated. The Greyfriars tinker rose to his feet, limping.

"I'd better get back to the school," he said. "P'r'aps one of you blokes will lend me a 'and."

"The lendfulness of an esteemed hand will be terrific!"

"We'll make that cad pay for this some time!" said Johnny Bull, between his teeth.

"You leave 'im to me!" said Tatters, with gleaming eyes. "But I got to get back now; I can't 'ardly walk."

"We'll get back to the road, and get a lift to the school," said Harry.

Tatters limped away with his friends, leaning heavily on Bob Cherry's arm. It was difficult for him to walk, and he had to compress his lips to keep back a cry of pain. Billy Bunter rolled after the juniors.

"I say, you fellows, we're nearer to Courtfield than to the school," he said. "Better make for Courtfield."

"What for, ass?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, we could get tea at the bunshop—"

"What?" roared Bob Cherry.

"You needn't yell at a chap for making a suggestion, Cherry! What I mean is, I'd stand Tatters a taxi back to Greyfriars, and we could stop at the bunshop for tea. If I stand the taxi, you fellows could stand the tea. That's fair."

"Ass!"
"Oh, really, Cherry! I mean it about the taxi," said Bunter. "I'll stand poor old Tatters a taxi with pleasure. One of you fellows can lend me the money. I'm expecting a postal order to-morrow—"

Bob Cherry looked round. He was encumbered with Tatters, and unable to deal with Bunter personally.

"Can't one of you fellows kick him?" he demanded.

"Oh, really, Cherry, I—"

"Pleased!" said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull! Ow! Keep off, you beast! Yah! Oh, my hat! Beast!"

Billy Bunter departed on top gear. He disappeared over the horizon almost as rapidly as the Highcliffians had done.

Harry Wharton & Co. moved on slowly with the limping Tatters. They were several miles from the school, and at a good distance from the road that crossed the common.

Tatters, his face pale with pain, leaned heavily on Bob, and limped on. They headed for the nearest point on the road, hoping to get a lift for Tatters. He was in no state to walk the distance back to Greyfriars.

They came in sight of the road at last, where cars were continually passing in one direction or the other.

"We'll pick up a lift for you here, old bean," said Bob. "Some jolly old motorist will give you a lift to the school. There's a car passing every other minute."

"I'll be glad of a blooming lift!" said Tatters, suppressing a groan.

The juniors reached the road and stopped. Plenty of cars would be passing in the direction of Greyfriars, and they had no doubt that some kindly motorist would give Tatters a lift as far as the school.

A small dark-blue car came whizzing from the direction of the town—a two-seater, with a single occupant—and Harry Wharton stepped into the road and held up his hand to the driver.

The car slowed down. The man who was driving stared at the Greyfriars junior.

"What—" he began. Then, with an oath, he drove on again, and Wharton leaped back from the rush of the car.

"Rackstraw!" he gasped. It was Cyril Rackstraw, cousin of Tatters, who was driving the car. The captain of the Remove stared after it as it vanished in a cloud of dust along the road.



Carne counted six five-pound notes and flung them at Rackstraw. "That settles matters now," he said coolly. "Not quite," returned Rackstraw. "You forget that I can prove enough against you to get you sacked from the school!"

"Rackstraw!" he repeated. "That scoundrel is here again!"

The car disappeared in a few moments. The meeting with the Greyfriars fellows had evidently startled Rackstraw, and he had driven on at a furious speed, and vanished.

"That rotter!" said Bob Cherry.

"Here comes another car!" said Frank Nugent. "That's Coker of the Fifth in it. Stop him!"

The juniors waved to the car, and it stopped. Horace Coker, of the Fifth Form stared at them from the window.

"What the thump—" he began wrathfully.

"Cholmondeley's hurt his leg," said Harry. "Give him a lift back to the school, Coker, there's a good chap!"

"Of all the check—" said Coker.

But he broke off as he glanced at Tatters' face, pale and drawn with pain. Coker of the Fifth was every known kind of an ass, but he was a good-natured fellow. He threw the door open.

"Hop in, kid!" he said.

Tatters limped into the car.

"Get on!" said Coker.

And the chauffeur got on, and the car whizzed off towards the school, leaving the Famous Five by the roadside.

His face was pale and set. It was borne in upon Carne's mind that he had reached the parting of the ways. That afternoon he had to see Rackstraw again—to report to the man whom his own folly had made his master.

He had failure to report, and he knew what would follow—another scheme, another cunning plot, with threats of what would happen if he failed to carry it out.

There was a deep, burning anger in the prefect's breast. He was sick of it; sick of it with a deep loathing.

He had not dared to defy Rackstraw. But there was a point beyond which he could not and would not go, and he had reached that point. The worm was turning!

Had all gone well, had he carried out his tyrant's instructions without a hitch, remorse would have tormented him; remorse of which Rackstraw's hard heart would have known and understood nothing. It might have driven him as far as a confession.

But all had not gone well. All had gone wrong—as wrong as it could go, almost. Instead of Cholmondeley being expelled, Carne's miserable machinations had brought trouble only to himself.

Six fellows at Greyfriars knew his dismal secret; knew that it was he who had tampered with the Remove master's desk the previous night, and had somehow contrived that the cunning clue he had left should point to the real culprit instead of to the innocent Tatters.

It could not go on! They could prove nothing! But suppose he tried again; suppose he succeeded! Then it was certain that Harry Wharton & Co. would speak out, even without proof.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Passing the Rubicon I

CARNE of the Sixth stood at his study window looking out into the old quadrangle of Greyfriars.

On Big side a football match was going on, and shouts from the field of play reached Carne's ears, but he did not heed them.

He stared into the old quad with unseeing eyes.

They would say, or rather shout out, what they knew. And Carne felt, with a shudder, that he could never face it out—he could not pile lie on lie, hypocrisy on hypocrisy; the truth would find him out.

He had been a tool in Rackstraw's hands, but he was now a broken tool—he dared not go on.

But that was not all! He was sick of it—sick of lying, sick of treachery, sick of it all.

Rackstraw, like many a cunning and unscrupulous man before him, made the mistake of believing others as bad as himself. He judged Carne by his own standard, and he judged wrong. The sportsman of the Sixth was bad enough, but between his character and such a character as Cyril Rackstraw's there was a great gulf fixed.

His resolution had been slow in forming, but it was growing hard. He was done with it. Fear of exposure had less to do with it than his shuddering horror of what he had done, and what he had nearly done.

He was done with it, and he had to face the consequences. And, as he stood staring dully from his window into the quad, he was thinking of those consequences—the sack from Greyfriars.

It was in Rackstraw's power to ruin him, and the rascal was not likely to show mercy if Carne turned him down. But even that the wretched fellow had, at long last, made up his irresolute mind to face.

He started a little, and fixed his eyes on a junior who came limping towards the House. It was Tatters of the Remove.

The boy seemed to have been hurt. His face was pale, and he limped, dragging a leg after him.

Carne watched him. He saw Mr. Quelch in the quad, and saw the Remove master stop and speak to the boy. The Form master's voice came to Carne through the open window.

"Cholmondeley, what is the matter?"

"Nothin' much, sir," answered Tatters. "I've 'urt my leg, sir. I'm going in to shove some embrocation on it, sir."

"Very well, Cholmondeley."

Tatters passed on into the House, Carne's eyes on him till he disappeared.

The prefect remained at the window. Once he crossed the study to the door, stopped, and turned back. He stared from the window again.

His resolution had been fixed, but it wavered. He seemed to see before him the stern face of the Head, to hear the icy voice "Carne, you are expelled!" He trembled.

Could he face it? Rackstraw would have no mercy, and it was in his power to cause his expulsion from the school. Could he face it?

He had resolved to meet the grandson of Sir George Cholmondeley, to defy him, to tell him that he was done with him, to dare him to do his worst. But a miserable feeling was in his heart that when he faced Rackstraw his courage would fail him, that his resolution would break down, and that he would cringe once more at the sound of his master's voice. And he was tempted to place it out of his own power to carry on by going to the Head and blurting out a confession.

But he could not. Perhaps some faint hope lingered at the back of his mind that Rackstraw would not carry out his threat, even when he was turned down. At all events, he felt that it was useless to meet the trouble half way. And yet—

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.

He crossed the study again, and this time he left it and went down the passage. He ascended the stairs and came into the Remove passage.

He stopped outside the door of Study No. 1.

The door was half open, and he could hear movements within. Tatters was there, rubbing his injured shin with Elliman's.

For a long minute the prefect stood at the door. Then, setting his lips, he stepped into the study.

Tatters started and stared up at him.

"You!" he ejaculated.

Carne closed the study door.

"What do you want 'ere?" demanded Tatters. "Didn't you know I was in? You come 'ere to 'ide something in my desk, or what?"

Carne winced.

"No!" he answered, with unexpected mildness.

Tatters stared.

"Well, what do you want?" he snapped.

"I've something to tell you, Cholmondeley," said Carne.

"Go and tell it to somebody else," said Tatters. "I can tell you that I don't want to 'ear it, Carne! And get out! You ain't the sort of covey that a bloke wants in his study."

Carne did not answer. He stood looking at the junior, a strange expression on his face.

"Quelch has just gone out," went on Tatters, with a derisive grin. "You got a chance of burgling his study agin, and sticking something on a bloke to drag him into it. Lots of red ink about, if you want any."

"You seem to know all about it," said Carne, with a quietness that astonished the Greyfriars tinker.

"You bet!" said Tatters. "You're up against a bloke that's a lot sharper than yourself, Carne; and I can tell you that sooner or later you'll get pinned down. Next time—"

"There won't be a next time," said Carne, with the same strange quietness. "You've nothing more to fear from me, Cholmondeley. Most likely I shall have left the school before the end of the week."

"Good riddance to bad rubbish, if you 'ave!" said Tatters. "What's your game now, trying to take a bloke in?"

"I'll tell you," said Carne. "You've had three narrow escapes from being expelled from the school, Cholmondeley. Your cousin, Cyril Rackstraw, is at the bottom of it. The game is to disgrace you with your grandfather, Sir George Cholmondeley, and give Rackstraw a chance of supplanting you there. But I dare say you've guessed that."

"You're telling me what I know, and what my friends know," answered Tatters, staring at him. "But I'm busted if I can guess why you're telling me. What's your game?"

"I'm telling you," said Carne, "to put you on your guard. Rackstraw may try the same game on after I'm gone. Very likely he will. He can't afford to be beaten; he's up to the ears in debt, and he's a ruined man unless he can ruin you with your grandfather. You've got to keep on your guard against him."

"My 'at!" said Tatters blankly. "You telling me this—and you 'and in glove with 'im all the time! My 'at!"

"I'm going to see him this afternoon," said Carne. "I'm going to break with him, and he's going to give me away to the Head and get me sacked. I'm speaking out to you now,

Cholmondeley, to put it out of my own power to knuckle under to him again.

"You guess, more or less, what I've done—and I've done it because I was under the villain's thumb. You can go to Mr. Quelch or the Head, if you like, and tell them what I've said, and I shall not deny it. That's all!"

"My 'at!" gasped Tatters.

Without another word, Carne walked out of Study No. 1 and closed the door after him.

Tatters remained staring blankly at the door.

"My 'at!" he ejaculated again.

"Bust my buttons!"

Carne went down the stairs, and left the House. He had crossed the Rubicon now, like Cæsar of old. Like Cortes, he had burned his ships behind him. He had left himself no retreat, and he felt all the better for it as he walked down to the gates.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Unexpected I

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"What—"

"It's jolly old Carne!" said Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton glanced round quickly.

The chums of the Remove were strolling across Courtfield Common. The captain of the Remove was looking very thoughtful.

He was thinking of Rackstraw. Tatters' cousin was in the neighbourhood of the school again, and none of the juniors doubted that it was for the purpose of getting in touch with Carne. They had no doubt that Rackstraw was to meet the prefect, and learn what had been the result of the plot against the Greyfriars tinker.

That plot had been an utter failure, owing to the astute intervention of Hurree Janset Ram Singh. Twice the astute nabob had saved Tatters from the machinations of his enemies. But what was to happen next time? The Co. did not doubt that there would be a "next time."

Rackstraw, with everything at stake, was not likely to give up his desperate scheming. And Carne of the Sixth was a slave at his orders.

Wharton was thinking whether the time had not come to speak out. It was true that there was no proof to offer, and such an accusation against a Greyfriars prefect was hardly likely to be credited without the strongest proof. Yet to keep silent was to allow Tatters' enemies to carry on. It was a difficult problem for the Co. to decide, and Wharton had to confess that he could not make up his mind what was best to be done.

It was then that Carne of the Sixth appeared in sight. He was crossing the common at a distance, appearing and disappearing among clumps of furze and brambles. He was not looking towards the juniors, and evidently had not seen them. He was walking with his eyes on the ground, taking no heed whatever of his surroundings.

The juniors, from the distance, watched him curiously. Carne remained more or less in sight for several minutes, and finally disappeared, heading for a part of the common that was overgrown with bushes. When he was out of sight, the chums of the Remove looked at one another. The same thought was in all their minds.

"That scallywag's gone to meet Rackstraw!" said Bob.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"That's pretty certain," he agreed.

"The certainfulness is terrific!"

"Of course, we knew that that rascal was here to see Carne," said Nugent. "He couldn't be here for anything else. If he hadn't got off in the car we'd have jolly well handled him, as we did before!"

"Yes, rather!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, if Carne's going to meet him now, he's hanging about somewhere on the common," said Harry. "What price following on after Carne, catching them together, and giving them a jolly good ragging?"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Great minds run in grooves," he remarked. "That's exactly what I was thinking, old bean."

"It is a terrifically wheezy good idea," agreed the Nabob of Bhanipur. "The ragfulness is the proper caper!"

"There's enough of us to handle the pair of them," said Johnny Bull. "Let's!"

And the Famous Five hurried in the direction taken by Carne of the Sixth, and followed him into the straggling bushes.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob. "Here he is!"

The juniors came on Carne quite suddenly. He was leaning on a tree, amid the bushes that hid him from the open common, with an unlighted cigarette in his mouth. His face was pale and harassed, and he seemed buried in troubled thought. He glanced up quickly at the sound of footsteps and rustling brambles, and started at the sight of the juniors. Evidently he had expected someone else, and the chums of the Remove knew who it was that he had expected.

Carne stared at the Famous Five.

He did not break out into an angry outburst, as they fully expected. He stared at them without speaking, and Harry Wharton regarded him very curiously.

He could read the signs of harassed trouble in Carne's face, which told how the strain on the wretched fellow's nerves was telling on him. It came into his mind that Carne was very near the end of his tether.

"Well, where's the other rotter?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Not here yet!" remarked Nugent.

"Mind if we wait, Carne?" asked Bob Cherry, with a cheery grin.

"What do you fags want here?" asked Carne, in an unexpectedly quiet voice. "You'd better clear."

"Rats!" retorted Bob.

Carne flushed, and a glint came into his eyes. After all, he was a Sixth Form prefect, and the juniors were Lower boys. He made a movement, and the Famous Five eyed him coolly. In ordinary circumstances, they would hardly have dreamed of "handling" a prefect of Greyfriars. But Carne had placed himself out of court, as it were, by his rascality. It was scarcely possible for him to "come the prefect" in the circumstances—when he was acting like a rascal—and the juniors were well aware of it.

"Go it, if you like!" grinned Bob. "You may as well begin, Carne! If you don't, we shall—as soon as the other rogue gets here."

Carne resumed his limp, leaning attitude against the tree. The brief flash of spirit passed. It was not much use attempting to exercise a prefect's authority over these juniors, who knew what he was, and what he had done.

"What do you want here, Wharton?" he asked, looking at the captain of the Remove, and passing Bob's remark unheeded.

"You're waiting for Rackstraw," said Harry. "We've seen him in a car this afternoon, and we know he's not far away."

"Yes," said Carne.

"Oh, you admit it?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Yes!"

The juniors eyed him. They could not understand Carne now. The bully of the Sixth seemed to have entirely disappeared, leaving in his place a fellow—they hardly knew.

"Well, we're going to wait, too," said Harry Wharton. "We've ragged that rotter once, and we're going to rag him again. We told him we would if he showed up here any more. If you interfere, we're going to rag you, too, Carne. So you'd better keep clear."

Carne smiled faintly.

"Rag him all you like," he said. "I shan't interfere! You can handle him when I've done with him, if you choose."

"When you've done with him?" repeated Wharton.

Carne breathed hard for a moment.

"I don't know how you fags got to know so much about it," he said in a low voice. "But you seem to know that I'm under that scoundrel's thumb, somehow. Well, it's coming to an end this afternoon. I'm rather glad you're here to see it. But you'd better get out of sight. The man may be here any minute now, and he won't show up if he spots you about. You can stay if you like, and see what happens. I'd rather you did, if you come to that. But get out of sight."

The juniors looked at one another.

"Do you mean that you're breaking with him?" asked Wharton at last.

"Yes."

"Gammon!" grunted Johnny Bull. "You don't dare to break with him, if what we've heard is true."

Carne made no reply to that. He leaned on the tree, chewing the end of the unlighted cigarette. He seemed indifferent to whether the chums of the Remove stayed or went.

There was a sound across the common of a car. Carne glanced at the Famous Five again.

"That's Rackstraw!" he said. "He will be here in a few minutes now. He's late already. If he sees you he will clear. I—I want to deal with him now, while my mind's made up. Get out of sight."

The Co. looked at Wharton, and he nodded. In silence, they backed away into the thick bushes near the tree where Carne stood leaning. If it was true that the prefect intended to break with the rascal in whose power he was, they wanted to know it for certain. And they were determined that Rackstraw should not escape from the spot without a severe handling. They took cover, and were out of sight when trampling footsteps approached the spot through the thickets.

A couple of minutes later a man came pushing through the brambles and stopped at the spot where Carne stood leaning against the tree. Harry Wharton & Co., from their cover, had a full view of him, and they recognised Cyril Rackstraw.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Turning of the Worm I

RACKSTRAW came to a halt.

Carne did not stir. Only, his eyes turned on Rackstraw with a glint in them. He did not speak.

Rackstraw looked at him for a

moment or two, with a rather puzzled expression. He was the first to speak.

"Well, you're here," he said.

"I'm here," assented the Sixth-Former of Greyfriars.

"I've kept you waiting," said Rackstraw. "I thought it best to keep clear for a bit. I sighted some of those young rascals on the common as I came along from Courtfield. It would not do for me to be seen meeting you."

"No," said Carne.

"Well, I'm here now," said Rackstraw, with a touch of impatience. "I suppose you've got something to report?"

"Yes."

Rackstraw made a step nearer to him eagerly.

"Has it worked?" he breathed.

"No."

Sir George Cholmondeley's grandson muttered an oath.

"You fool! Have you bungled again? Bungled, as you did before! You'd better take care, Carne! I'm relying on you, and I'm making it worth your while to be useful to me. I'm getting to the end of my patience. I don't think you are playing me false, but—" He paused, searching the Greyfriars man's set face with keen eyes. "Tell me what's happened. Did you carry out my instructions?"

"Yes."

"Then how have you failed?" exclaimed Rackstraw angrily. "The thing was a certainty, if you were careful. I came here expecting to hear that Arthur had been expelled from the school for an attempted robbery."

"I know that."

"Well, what has happened?" snapped Rackstraw. "How did you fail?" His eyes gleamed at Carne. "You've not been found out?"

"Yes."

Rackstraw started violently. "By your headmaster?" he exclaimed.

"No."

"By whom, then?" snarled Rackstraw.

"Some of the juniors—the boys you know—Wharton and his friends. They've known all about it, somehow, for some time."

"How could they know?" exclaimed Rackstraw savagely. "How could they possibly even suspect?"

Carne shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know. I was fairly knocked over when I found they knew. They nosed it all out somehow."

"They can't know. They can only suspect, at the most. They cannot have a vestige of proof."

"That's so," said Carne. "There's no proof or they'd have gone to the Head about it and I should have been kicked out of the school before this, as I deserve."

"Then there's nothing to fear. Whatever they may suspect, they can know nothing and prove nothing. Are you allowing yourself to be frightened by a shadow? Tell me what has happened."

"I did everything you told me," said Carne, in a dull voice. "I hacked Quelch's money-drawer in his desk and spilt red ink over it, and stole, like a sneaking thief, into the Remove dormitory at midnight and planted the clue on young Cholmondeley. I was interrupted by a fellow who got out of bed, but I cleared without being seen, and left a stain of red ink on the boy's pillow—enough to trace him and convict him. When I'd done it I—I made up

my mind to confess everything to the Head, first thing in the morning."

"What?" panted Rackstraw.

Carne smiled bitterly.

"But when the morning came my nerve failed and I carried on," he continued. "But I was glad—do you hear, glad!—when it turned out a frost. Somehow those juniors got on to it, and they somehow—I can't make out how—planted the clue on me, instead of Cholmondeley."

"Impossible!"

"That's what happened. I left a smudge of red ink on the boy's pillow, but it was not found there. It was found on my own pillow, in my own room, when the search was made. Cholmondeley has not even been suspected; but I was called up before the Head and asked to account for what they found."

"Good gad!"

"They turned the tables on me, somehow," said Carne. "They knew that I'd done the trick in Quelch's study, and they landed it on me—the right man! I crawled out of it, with the Head. They're still inquiring after the fellow who tried to burgle Quelch's desk. Nobody suspects Cholmondeley. If anybody's suspected, it's me."

"Good gad!" repeated Rackstraw. "But how—how did they know? How did they contrive—"

"I fancy it's the Indian kid; he's as keen as a razor. But I don't know—and don't care! That's what's happened, as you wanted to know."

Rackstraw eyed him for some moments in savage silence. It was evident that this news was a severe shock to the plotting rascal.

"You must be more careful next time," he said at last.

"Next time?" repeated Carne.

"Yes. One swallow does not make a summer," said Rackstraw, between his teeth. "A dozen failures do not matter, so long as we succeed in the long run. We've got to succeed."

Carne laughed.

"I'll tell you something more," he said. "I stood in Hall this morning, with all the School, waiting to see Cholmondeley sacked. When it turned out

otherwise I was glad. If he had been sacked—" Carne paused for a moment. "I didn't realise then, but I know now what I should have done. I should have gone straight to the Head and told him the truth."

"What?" yelled Rackstraw.

"You got me under your thumb," said Carne. "You tried to make me as big a villain as yourself. I thought I could do it to save my skin. But it's not in me. I couldn't."

"You can—and shall!" said Rackstraw, gritting his teeth. "You poor fool, you've been frightened! Pull yourself together. You've been scared, that's all."

"I've been scared," admitted Carne. "But that's not all. I'm done with you, Cyril Rackstraw."

"You're not done with me," said Rackstraw quietly. "You're going to carry out my orders, Carne, and you're going to be successful next time, or you'll suffer for it. I've heard this sort of talk from you before, and it's ended the same way. You dare not face the sack from your school. I have only to let your headmaster know—"

"That's enough," said Carne. He fumbled in his pocket and drew out a wallet. "You've lent me money, Rackstraw, and I owe you thirty pounds. I've got it here. I've been raking it together for weeks, and now I've got it. Here it is."

"Fool! Keep it."

Carne quietly counted six five-pound notes, folded them together, and flung them at Rackstraw.

"That's what I owe you. Take it or leave it. I've paid you," he said. "I owe you nothing now."

The little wad of notes fell at Rackstraw's feet. He let it lie unheeded for a moment or two, then stooped and picked it up.

"And you think that's the end?" he asked.

"That's the end," said Carne.

"Not quite!" said Rackstraw, his voice trembling with rage. "You forget that I can prove enough against you to get you sacked from your school. I've

a photograph of you in talk with a book-maker at the Lantham Races. What do you think your headmaster will do when he sees that?"

"He will turn me out of Greyfriars," answered Carne.

"You know that?"

"I know it."

"And you're facing it?"

"I'm facing it."

Rackstraw stared at him. It was evident that he was taken entirely by surprise by this new development. Obviously, he had never expected the worm to turn.

He stood silent, at a loss. He was forced to realise that the tool upon which he had relied had broken in his hands.

He had led the blackguard of the Greyfriars Sixth into reckless folly, and trapped him. He had evidence in his hands that could not fail to cause the hapless sportsman to be expelled from Greyfriars. He had never dreamed that Carne would dare to face it. But it was the unexpected that had happened. The worm, at long last, had turned.

For a long minute rage and dismay held the plotter silent. His voice was husky with fury when he spoke again.

"You'll think better of this, Carne. I'll give you time to think—"

"You needn't!" answered Carne.

"I've thought better of it. I may as well tell you that I've spoken to young Cholmondeley already, told him all I know, and warned him to be on his guard against you."

"You—you mad fool—you—" Rackstraw choked.

"That finishes it!" said Carne. "Go to my headmaster as soon as you like. I know what's coming to me and I've made up my mind to it."

Rackstraw tapped his breast pocket. "I've got the photograph here! If we part enemies, it will be in your headmaster's hands by the first post in the morning."

"I know that!"

"And—and you dare—"

Carne stirred from the tree at last. He made a step towards Rackstraw.

"I've told you that I'm done with you," he said. "I've tried to make it clear! I'm going to make it clearer."

"What do you mean?" snarled Rackstraw.

"This!"

As Carne spoke, his clenched fist shot out, straight from the shoulder, and crashed into Rackstraw's face.

There was a yell from Rackstraw as he went spinning backwards. All the strength of the prefect's arm had been put into the blow, and the rascal was half-stunned as he crashed on the ground.

He lay gasping and spluttering.

Carne gave him one look as he lay, and strode away through the bushes. The die was cast now! The worm had turned—with a vengeance!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rough Justice!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stared at the gasping, panting rascal sprawling under the tree blankly. The rustling in the bushes ceased; Carne was gone. He seemed to have forgotten that the juniors were there at all. He was gone; leaving Rackstraw sprawling where he had knocked him down. The sudden denouement had taken the juniors by surprise.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

A Staff of Expert Contributors

are all at your service if you read POPULAR WIRELESS. Week by week they will give you particulars of the newest and latest developments in the world of Radio.

If you are not getting the fullest possible satisfaction from your set, POPULAR WIRELESS will probably put you right. If you can't get as many foreign stations as the chap next door—again, "P.W." will put you right.

Place a regular order with your Newsagent right away.

POPULAR WIRELESS

Every Thursday - - - - - 3d.

"The only hatfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "and the surprisefulness is great."

Rackstraw sat up dizzily.

His hand went to his face. A dark bruise was forming between his eyes where Carne's fist had struck.

A string of savage words fell from his lips as he sat in the grass. If he had doubted before, he could not doubt now. Carne of the Sixth was done with him, and he had made it very clear.

The juniors' feelings towards Carne had changed very considerably. They understood now why he had wished them to witness that peculiar interview. What had happened had convinced them, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Carne's repentance was sincere; that he had done evil reluctantly, and that he was determined to do no more. They could feel sympathy for the wretched fellow whose folly had placed him in so terrible a position; and who, at the finish, had chosen the right path, facing consequences that meant ruin to him. For there was no doubt about what Carne was facing. It was in Rackstraw's power to get him expelled from the school; and it could hardly be doubted that the rascal would do his very worst now. What had been so long a threat hanging over Carne's head, would now become a reality; and Carne, so far as Greyfriars School was concerned, was done for.

Rackstraw staggered to his feet at last.

Bob Cherry made a movement; but Wharton dropped a hand on his arm. The juniors remained where they were, watching Rackstraw from the thicket. They were rather curious to know what the rascal's next proceedings would be. His schemes had fallen about his ears like a house of cards, and nothing remained to him but vengeance. The juniors rather expected him to follow Carne, to exact vengeance on the spot. But Rackstraw did not seem to intend to leave the spot.

For long minutes he stood there, rubbing his bruised face, and muttering bitter, savage words.

He slipped his hand into his breast pocket at last, and drew out a little leather case. From the case he took an envelope and a fountain-pen; and resting the envelope on the case, on his knee, he wrote an address on it. The juniors could not see what he was writing; but they heard him mutter the words as he wrote:

"Dr. Locke, Greyfriars School!"

He was addressing the envelope to the headmaster of Greyfriars.

Having done so, he fumbled in the leather case again, and drew out two small squares—one a printed photograph, the other a negative. The latter he returned to the case. The former he slipped into the envelope.

An evil, malicious grin dawned on



"Now, Rackstraw," said Wharton, raising his stick threateningly, "you're to hand over that negative and beg us to destroy it as a personal favour." Rackstraw choked with rage as he parted with the evidence.

his face as he fastened down the flap of the envelope.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances.

They did not need telling what the rascal intended. That tell-tale photograph was to be posted, immediately, to Dr. Locke at Greyfriars. It was the end for Carne at the school.

Wharton drew a deep breath. An hour ago, nothing would have pleased the chums of the Remove more than the certainty that Carne of the Sixth was to be sacked from the school. But circumstances had changed since then.

It was not for the evil he had done, but for the good that he had at last determined to do, that Carne was to be so terribly punished. That altered the case very considerably. Harry Wharton had certainly never expected to feel friendly towards the bully of the Sixth. But he was feeling friendly to him now, and anxious about him. For Carne, the schemer and plotter, the enemy of a boy who had never injured him, he had only contempt and aversion. But for Carne, who had risked everything rather than be dragged into a crime, Wharton was prepared to do anything in his power. And it came into his mind now that he could save the fellow who had repented.

He gave his comrades a quick look. "Collar him!" he whispered. "What-ho!" breathed Bob Cherry. "Go it!" muttered Nugent. Harry Wharton leaped out of the thicket. His chums were after him in a twinkling.

Before Rackstraw could realise that they were there they were round him, and Wharton had snatched the envelope addressed to Dr. Locke from his hand.

"What—who—you—" stuttered Rackstraw, staring at the Famous Five in amazement and rage.

"Little us, old bean!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The usefulness is terrific, my esteemed and disgusting Rackstraw!" chuckled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Rackstraw's eyes blazed. "Give me that letter!" he shouted. He made a furious stride towards the captain of the Remove. Four pairs of hands closed on him instantly and he was held.

Wharton, quietly and coolly, tore the envelope and the photograph it contained into a hundred tiny fragments and scattered them on the wind.

"That's that!" he remarked. "The thatfulness is preposterous." Rackstraw was struggling in the grasp of the Co. He was no weakling; but the four juniors held him easily enough. "You young scoundrels—" he hissed. Harry Wharton laughed contemptuously.

"That's a word that applies to you, not us, Mr. Rackstraw," he said. "Hold him, you men! We're not done with him yet."

"What-ho!" chuckled Bob. "We've got the beauty! He's going to make Carne sit up; but we'll jolly well make him sit up first."

"He's not going to make Carne sit up," said Wharton coolly. "Carne's been a pretty thorough rascal, and we've been up against him; but that's over now. Carne's done the right thing; and this scoundrel is not going to make him suffer for it."

"Not if we can stop him!" said Johnny Bull, with a nod. "But how—"

"I've torn up the photograph," said Harry. "But any number of photographs can be taken from the same negative."

"That does Carne in!" said Nugent. "Not quite! He has the negative there—I saw it when he took it out," said the captain of the Remove. "He's going to hand it over; and when it's destroyed, his teeth will be drawn. It's the only proof he's got against Carne—and we're going to make an end of it."

Rackstraw ground his teeth. "You young villain! If you think you are going to rob me—"

"Can it!" interrupted Wharton. "Nobody's going to take the negative from you. You're going to make us a present of it."

"What!" yelled Rackstraw.

"Will you hand it over?"

"No!" yelled Rackstraw. "And I'll tell you this. I shall get back to my car, drive into Courtfield, and call at the first photographer's to get a new print made from the negative, and it will be posted to Dr. Locke to-day. Now let me go!"

"Not just yet," said Wharton cheerfully. "We're not done with you yet, Mr. Rackstraw! Sure you won't hand over the negative?"

"Never, you young fool!"

"I—I say, we can't take it," said Johnny Bull dubiously. "It's the man's property, you know, villain as he is."

"I've said that nobody's going to take it," answered the captain of the Remove. "He's going to give it to us and beg us to destroy it. We're going to oblige him, like the obliging fellows we are."

"You young idiot!" snarled Rackstraw. "Do you think for one moment—"

"The thankfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh.

"Keep him safe!" said Harry.

The captain of the Remove took out his pocket-knife, stepped into the thicket, and cut a thick switch. He came back with it in his hand, and Cyril Rackstraw eyed him apprehensively.

"What are you going to do?" he hissed between his teeth. "What—"

"Shove him on the ground!" said Harry.

Bump! Rackstraw, struggling fiercely, was slammed down in the grass, face down. Two of the juniors held his arms, two of them his legs, and Rackstraw wriggled and struggled in vain. Wharton raised the stick.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Rackstraw was in a favourable position for a flogging. The captain of the Remove proceeded to administer one.

The lashes came down with all the force of Wharton's sturdy arm. The rascal in the grass wriggled and writhed and howled.

"Ow! Stop it! Help! Stop it! Oh! Ow!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Probably Cyril Rackstraw had never received a thrashing since his school-days. No doubt he had been flogged then, and this recalled old times to him. No headmaster's flogging was quite so severe as the castigation the wriggling rascal was receiving now.

Wharton was breathing rather hard when he had landed a dozen lashes. He had put his beef into all of them. Rackstraw was howling with anguish. His struggling was frantic, but it did not avail him. The Co. held him with a grip that was like a steel vice.

"That's a dozen," said Wharton.

"That's a flogging, as a warning to you, Mr. Rackstraw. Now about the negative."

"Let me go!" shrieked Rackstraw.

"Dear man!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "We're not letting you go, not by long chalks! We're too jolly fond of your company!"

"You see, we're rather enjoying this," chortled Johnny Bull. "I suppose you're not. But a fellow can't please everybody. But it may do you good."

"You young villains—"

"Are you giving us the negative, Mr. Rackstraw?" asked Wharton.

"No!" yelled Rackstraw.

Whack, whack, whack!

Yaroooh! Whoop! Help!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "I fancy he will be giving it to us soon, and begging us to take it, on his jolly old bended knees."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Take it!" yelled Rackstraw. "Take it, and leave me alone, you young fiends!"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"We're not going to take it," he answered coolly. "It's your property, you know. You're to hand it over and beg us to destroy it as a personal favour to you. We shall grant the favour if you ask nicely."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

"Let go one of his paws," said Harry. One of Rackstraw's hands was released. In a great hurry, he grabbed the leather case from his pocket, tore it open, and tore out the negative.

"There it is!" he gasped.

He held it out to Harry Wharton, glaring at him at the same time with a homicidal glare.

"You haven't asked me to take it yet."

"Take it!" hissed Rackstraw.

"Say please, and be polite about it," suggested the captain of the Remove.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Rackstraw choked with rage. The stick rose in the air again.

"I'm not waiting long," remarked Wharton. "If you haven't had enough—"

"Please take it!" gasped Rackstraw.

"That's all right," Wharton took the negative. "What do you want me to do with this, Mr. Rackstraw?"

Rackstraw eyed him evilly. But the upraised stick was too much for him. He had had enough, and he did not want any more.

"Destroy it!" he gasped.

"Say please!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pip-pip-please destroy it!" panted Rackstraw, with the look of a demon.

"Certainly, if you make a point of it!" assented the captain of the Remove blandly. And he cut the negative into small fragments with his pocket-knife, and scattered them far and wide. The evidence against Carne of the Sixth vanished on the wind across the common.

"That's that!" said Wharton. "Anything more we can do for you, Mr. Rackstraw? We're awfully obliging fellows if you ask us nicely."

"Let me go!" hissed Rackstraw.

"We're done with you now," agreed Wharton. "Let the scoundrel go, you men. You'd better bear in mind, Mr. Rackstraw, that you'll get the same again, and a little over, if we ever catch you near Greyfriars!"

Rackstraw staggered to his feet.

"Heo-haw, hee-haw, hee-haw!"

The sudden braying of a donkey sounded near at hand.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" cried Bob Cherry. "If it ain't Rackstraw's brother calling him I'll eat my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors looked round, and their eyes opened wide at the sight of old Farmer Jossor's ass roaming about loose quite near at hand.

"Trot over and get him, Bob," said Wharton. "Perhaps Rackstraw would like a joy-ride on his back. There's some straw binding over there by the fence we can use."

Bob sped across to the donkey, caught hold of its halter, and led it back to his waiting chums.

"Now grab Rackstraw, you fellows," said Wharton, "and shove him aboard."

Many hands made light work, and

within the space of two minutes Rackstraw was secured somewhat uncomfortably back to front on the moko's back, and, to add to his comical appearance, Johnny Bull placed an old saucepan on his head.

"You young villains!" hissed Rackstraw. "Just you wait!"

"No time, old bean!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Off you go, Neddy!"

He gave the animal a playful tap on its hind quarters and it trotted away.

"Good-bye to bad rubbish!" cried Wharton.

"Hear, hear!"

The donkey trotted off in the direction of the village, the cries of its unfortunate burden floating back to the ears of the juniors.

"Come on, you fellows!" shouted Harry Wharton, breaking into a trot. "We don't want to miss the best part of the fun!"

Racing hard in the wake of the donkey they soon reached the village street, where a party of youths quickly congregated to cheer the unfortunate Rackstraw on.

"Go it, Neddy!" one of them cried. "First past the post wins a packet of chocolates!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

As if to give the village youths another treat, the donkey suddenly turned when it got to the bottom of the street and retraced its steps.

Harry Wharton & Co., to get a better view of Rackstraw's discomfiture, climbed to the top of an old brick wall.

"Here he comes, you fellows!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Give him a cheer!"

"Hip, hip, hurrah!"

At that moment P.-c. Tozer, attracted by the noise of the village youths, arrived on the scene, and his hat almost flew from his head at the strange sight.

"My eye!" he ejaculated. "Wot's this 'ere mean?"

By the time he had recovered somewhat the donkey, bearing its burden, had vanished down a side street.

"That'll teach the rotter a lesson," said Wharton, clambering down from the wall. "Someone's sure to release him sooner or later. Let's go while the going's good."

And Harry Wharton & Co., with ample reason for being pleased with themselves, started back to Greyfriars School in a cheery mood.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Good for Evil!

TAP!

Carne of the Sixth started convulsively as the knock came at his study door.

He was moving restlessly about the room. The winter dusk was falling, the shadows deepening, but Carne had not turned on the light. In the glow from the fire his face showed white and strained.

He had gone directly to his study when he reached the school. All was over with him now, and he knew it—knew it with a strange calmness. The certainty of ruin was better than the torment of mind from which he had suffered for long weeks. A suitcase lay on the table, half-packed—there were heaps of books, and other articles, about the study—Carne had begun to pack.

Whether the blow would fall that night, or on the morrow, he did not know; but he knew that it must fall. He was getting ready to go—with slow hands and reluctant heart. Sometimes

(Continued on page 28.)

The ISLAND OF SLAVES!



As the bellum got under way heavy knives and daggers came hurtling through the air, perilously near the heads of Guy and his companions.

Running the Gauntlet!

ONCE, twice, he struck with all his force at the captain of the slave dhow cringing near the mainmast, and sent him spinning like a top. The muscles of his powerful back rippled under his black skin in the lantern light, and again he sent that terrible lash sweeping downward. This time it met the unconscious body of Ras Dhin, and the thong curved round the Abyssinian's chest.

"Belay, you fool!" Guy roared. "Skiddoo!"

Emitting an outburst of demoniacal laughter, the giant drew the pliant whip round his waist and knotted it; then, in hope of freedom, he leaped like an African deer toward the stern-rail.

"Buck up, Chota!" Tony yelped. "There's a rope over the side. Get down it and into the bellum!"

Their one hope of escape in that native bellum with mast stepped, which

was tied astern, was that the Arab crew would not realise exactly the nature of the disorder on the after deck. As the chums knew, if they came armed with rifles, they would not stand a dog's chance. But luckily, neither Ras Dhin nor the Arab skipper were in a fit state to explain what had happened so swiftly.

The African slave was the first to reach the rope hanging down from the high stern of the dhow, but quickly though he went down it, Chotajee went down even faster so that his sternsheets bumped on top of the negro's frizzy head! Neither Guy nor Tony waited to go down that rope; they simply vaulted over the rail and splashed into the sea, sending bright blue phosphorescent eddies reaching out into the night.

Quickly the chums scrambled into the bellum at the same time that Chotajee and the slave got aboard, and staggering forward, Tony sawed swiftly through the painter that held it to the dhow.

(See introduction on page 26.)

Tony and Guy are collecting enough cutlery to open a sale—but the knives are being thrown at them!

"Now then, Chota," Guy cried, "lend a hand with the sail! Yo-ho, heave!"

Snatching up the one oar, Tony flung it into the rowlock at the stern of the craft, and by a few vigorous sweeps brought round the head of the boat, thus revealing excellent seamanship, for the wind, which had veered round, bellied the sail as it crept up.

In another moment or two the stern rail of the dhow was lined with the villainous faces of the Arab crew who all began shouting and gesticulating at once. They knew that the babu had been captured, and there he was with a negro slave and two white men! That and the fact that they had seen their captain and Ras Dhin lying on the deck was quite enough for them to size up pretty accurately what had occurred!

Heavy knives and daggers came hurtling through the air and stuck quivering into the woodwork of the bellum. One of them nicked the sternsheets of Chotajee, who was leaning forward on a thwart facing the bow, and clattered on to a seat. The babu leaped up and clutched the mast with a mighty howl of anguish.

"Yaroooh!"

"Hit?" Guy exclaimed.

"S-s-stung!" Chotajee chattered. "By unluckful misfortune I deposited posterior portion of anatomy on same seat with debased wasp or hornet!"

"Only the prick of a knife!" Tony assured him. "My hat, duck your tappenny! We're collecting enough cutlery to put in a sale at cut prices!"

Two or three more knives slashed through the sail of the bellum and stuck quivering into the mast and boat, but the fugitives crouched low and escaped the small, shimmering thunderbolts of whetted steel.

It was a strange scene—the bellum with its triangular sail, in a sweeping curve, leaping out to sea with the spray whipping up from the bows over the fugitives. Guy tautened the stays of the mast, and Tony, at the stern, stood up with legs astraddle, working the sweep with all the power of his young muscles. Crouching under a thwart was Chotajee, the babu, practising his own favourite motto that sometimes "discreetfulness is better than valour." But the giant negro rose upward as the knives began to fall short, expanded his great chest, uplifted his two fists, and bellowed abuse in the rich Abyssinian tongue, giving his own pungent version of the zoological specimens he deemed to be the Arabs' forebears.

Ashore there was still a crimson glow from the remains of the destroyed ammunition dump which cast a pink reflection on the sea and showed up the dhow in gaunt, black outline.

Then suddenly bellows of pain and fury rose from the Arab craft, and the

chums knew that Ras Dhin and Hassan had come to their senses and were feeling those lacerating blows of the rhinoceros-hide whips.

"I'll bet," Tony exclaimed, "that they'll take it out of those other poor swabs in the hold—the slaves, I mean."

The escaped slave took the whip from around his waist and snapped the thong in the air until it sounded like pistol shots echoing over the sea. His flow of taunts and abuse continued unchecked, and now and again he broke off into deep guttural laughter.

"This is old blacking's joy-day!" Guy chuckled. "Wish I understood his lingo, for he seems to have a rattling fine vocabulary!"

Chotajee, who had a very imperfect knowledge of the Abyssinian tongue, understood enough to explain one thing which gave the naval chums the greatest satisfaction. It was that there were only two rhinoceros-hide whips on the dhow, and the remaining slaves at least would be spared anything worse than blows with a salted rope.

The noise of the negro slave and the tramping of his dancing feet in the bellum, put renewed confidence into the little babu. So he crawled out from under the thwart, and throwing out his own pigeon-chest, also hurled abuse back at the Arabs.

"Wah-wah! Shabash! Bravo! Well done!" He applauded the last feeble efforts to fling the knives after the boat. "Truly, as Indian proverb has it, you could not hit elephant's broadside from one cat's length! Go and eat cokefulness, sons of apes! May moss breedfully multiply in your debased beards, and may abundant cockroaches fall in your curry!"

Crack! Crack! Crack!
Three yellow flashes in swift succession stabbed the darkness, each accompanied by an ear-shattering detonation. Some of the Arabs had fetched those long guns with butts of silver filigree work, and were firing from the dhow's poop-deck!

Two bullets whipped the white spray from the top of a wave and one thudded into the mast three inches from Chotajee's head!

"Yaroooh!"
The way that the little babu changed his tone and "went to earth" under the thwart was an amusing example of the power of fear on the human mind!

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Tony.
He crouched low in the bellum, allowing the sail only to do the work of propelling the craft.

"Bob down, you big lump of blacking!" Guy roared at the negro. "If you get one of those lead pills in your bread-basket it'll be good-bye for ever to the chance of seeing your coal-black mammy!"

They took all the cover that was available in the boat, while the vicious leaden slugs shrieked over them like enraged insects; but with every passing moment the bellum got farther and farther away from the dhow. Here and there the sea leaped into foam, or a bullet snicked away and went ricocheting with a curious burring sound into the night. Occasionally, splinters leaped out of the woodwork or there was the faintest zip as a bullet drilled a neat hole through the wind-filled sail.

"They'll give chase, of course!" Guy muttered.

"More than half the crew's ashore!" Tony reminded him. "It'll take all the strength of the men they've got aboard

to haul up their sea-anchors, and they'll be too scared to bring up any of the slaves to help 'em. Besides, I don't suppose either Ras Dhin or old Hassan have collected their wits enough so far to give plain orders."

The rifles had a long range; but the bellum, standing out to sea with the stern towards the dhow to offer the smallest possible target, was being swallowed more and more by the darkness of the night. The target was one which a Bisley marksman would have found difficult; and, as the minutes passed, the Arabs never put aboard more than one shot in ten. At last the firing died down, but the chums could still hear faintly the pandemonium that was going on aboard the dhow.

Once out of sight, Guy suggested that they should alter course and stand into the wind as far as possible, in case the dhow pursued them. All the chances were that the Arabs would suppose that the bellum would take full advantage of the wind by running with it, and would make a pursuit miles to windward and so miss them altogether.

This proved a sound scheme, for the dhow actually left the island and searched in the wrong direction altogether, before returning. Then, feeling themselves safe, the chums altered course again and bowled along at a clinking rate towards the mainland of Arabia.

The Mob at the Mosque!

THE fishermen of the big port of Ahkab, a hundred miles from Aden, on the south-east coast of Arabia, were spreading their nets in the rising sun when a bellum slipped on to the sand of the shelving beach and four weird figures tumbled out.

Two white men in stained trousers and vests, a giant half-naked negro, and a dishevelled little Indian, were queer fish indeed to the natives, and the four were soon surrounded by a throng of curious mahogany-coloured Arabs.

"This is Ahkab all right!" Guy said to his companions. "I recognised it from the position of the mosques and minarets not long after we got a land-fall. Ask these jabbering jimmies, Chota, where is the residence of the British consul, Major Gundath."

In his weird Arabic, the Bengali explained untruthfully that they had been

THE FIRST CHAPTERS RETOLD.

LIEUTENANT GUY EASTON, SUB-LIEUTENANT TONY DUNN, and CHOTAJEE, a Bengali interpreter, are sent to board a suspicious-looking dhow heading a southerly course out of the Red Sea. On the return journey, however, they are shipwrecked and cast on the Island of Khoof, arriving in the village just in time to contrive the escape of two captive Somalis who have fallen into the hands of Sheikh Haji of Khoof. Shortly after this, the trio make the startling discovery that the dhow which they had been sent to inspect has called at the island to pick up a cargo of rifles and ammunition for shipment to Afghanistan. Without delay Guy and Tony set fire to the store-dump and then swim out to the dhow, aboard which they discover Chotajee, who meantime had been captured by the Arabs, tied to the mainmast, and undergone a severe flogging at the hands of Ras Dhin, a giant Abyssinian. Mad with rage, the two chums hurl themselves at the Bengali's captor, pay him back in his own coin, and then free Chotajee.

"Now beat it aft!" pants Guy.

(Now read on.)

out fishing, had been driven to take shelter among the islands from the recent storm, and had only just managed to make land again. Then he asked where the consul might be found, and two or three of the fishermen offered to act as escort to the residence in the town.

Although it was so early in the morning, the narrow, dusty streets of Ahkab were astir. The shops in the bazaars were opening, and camel caravans were clumping through to a raising of much dust, with bales of Mocha coffee, dates, and rice from the interior. A considerable crowd were at their heels by the time they reached the courtyard of the residence. And here they met a sullen-looking Arab whom one of the guides told Chotajee was the consul's personal servant, Sayyid.

"Salaam, Sayyid, may your shadow never grow less," the little Indian said pleasantly. "My masters, who are illustrious white sahibs, desire to hold speakful conversation with the honourable consul."

"Impshi! Go away!" Sayyid growled. "My master no rise from his sleep."

Clearly he imagined that the white men were ordinary stranded sailors who wanted to beg money and a passage from Arabia. But, finding that Sayyid understood some English, Guy explained that they were naval officers, and the Arab invited them into the house and went to notify his master whom he could hear stirring.

For some time they kicked their heels in a room with a stone, mosaic floor and furnished in Eastern style with ebony furniture and wrought brasswork. Then Major Gundath appeared, a burly, pallid-faced man, wearing dressing-gown and curly toed slippers.

"Well, what's the trouble?" he demanded brusquely.

The chums rose and introduced themselves.

"We're officers from the Falcon," Guy explained, "and we got adrift during the storm and were cast ashore on the Island of Khoof."

"Khoof!" the consul echoed. "You're sure it was that island? It's the dickens of a long way from here."

"Don't we know it!" Guy smiled wearily. "We managed to take watches coming back, and so got some sleep, but we've had no decent grub for ages."

The consul relaxed in his manner.

"I'm just going to have chota hazri (little breakfast), and you had better join me," he said.

Over the much needed food and drink, the chums explained their amazing adventures, and how they had escaped from Ras Dhin, the Abyssinian, and Sheikh Haji, whom they had discovered to be both slave-dealers and gun-runners. For proof they had the rescued negro slave to give details of the capture of himself and others in Africa and their shipment from Tajura.

Major Gundath looked from one to the other of his visitors.

"By Jove, it seems incredible!" he muttered. "Our wireless installation here was badly damaged in the storm, otherwise I should have had word from the Falcon about you fellows being missing. This morning the thing should be all right again, and I'll broadcast the news that you're safe, and you can wait here until wireless orders are received from the captain of your ship."

"That suits us, sir," Guy smiled, "and

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,202.

especially if you will extend your kindness to rigging us out with some other clothes for the time being."

During the morning Major Gundath had business to do with various Arab authorities of the port.

"I suggest, old-timer," Tony remarked to Guy, "that we steer a course down to the bazaars and buy some rope-soled shoes and other odds and ends of kit if we can get 'em."

The consul had advanced them some money, and both were eager to stretch their legs after their long, cramped voyage in the bellum.

"May I humbly beg pardons for restfully staying in illustrious residence, sahibs," Chotajee pleaded, with a yawn. "Besides feebleness of limbs, I have distressfulness in honourable bread-basket; not to mention acheful pains of whole cistern."

"All serene," Guy said. "You can stay here and look after old King Cole. We shall want him to give evidence at the naval court of inquiry when it's held."

So, leaving Chotajee and the negro together at the residence, Guy and Tony set off through the streets of Ahkab, confident that they could make a few purchases without an interpreter. Both wore suits of drill borrowed from the consul, with jackets rather too short and loose for them, and white sun-helmets which they had had to pad inside with paper to make them fit.

The tropic sun poured heat into the narrow streets, and the jostling throng of Arabs, Somalis, and Indians raised the dust in choking clouds. Some of the streets, where casement windows almost met overhead, were partly roofed with wooden rafters and reed matting. Through rents in the matting the sunlight poured in in great golden shafts, alive with dust and myriads of flies.

"Well, you don't jolly well have to ask your way here!" Guy grinned. "You've only got to follow your nose, old top!"

By sense of smell they located the meat and fish bazaars—and avoided them! Heedless of the curious glances of the Arabs, they passed through another bazaar—or market—where the fragrant spices of the East Indies were for sale, and so to a quarter of general shops with open fronts, and each with its small coffee urn for supplying a thimbleful of sweet, thick coffee to customers.

"Pity these picturesque places are all so beastly dirty!" Tony remarked.

They paused to look at carpets from Samarkand, brassware from Benares, moonstones from Ceylon, ivory carvings from North Africa, and sandalwood boxes and vases from Java. Some comfortable footwear was what they needed, though, and they wandered on, seeking a place where they could obtain some.

"Flies biting you, Guy?" Tony remarked, as they moved through the throng. "Better sheer away from this side of the street; there's a date store with customers in the shape of five million wasps!"

Guy glanced back over his shoulder. "It isn't flies or wasps," he returned. "For the past quarter of an hour I've had a feeling that someone's been on our heels."

Tony laughed.

"Since we've been down here," he chuckled, "we've had hundreds of Arabs round our heels, not to mention a few dozen pariah dogs."

"I mean," Guy said, "that I've the feeling that we've been deliberately followed, Tony. Once or twice I've caught sight of an Arab in a chestnut-brown robe drawn up over his face."

"A lot of 'em keep their faces veiled," remarked Tony easily; "it keeps the dust and flies out of their traps."

A gateway leading to the outer court of a blue-domed mosque attracted their attention. It was built in the form of an arch of solid white marble, and inlaid with black marble quotations from the Koran, while across the entrance was festooned a great golden chain.

"Let's go in," Tony suggested.

Guy grabbed his arm.

"That would be as much as your life is worth, old son," he said. "Only true Moslems are ever allowed to set foot past that chain, and if an 'infidel' set his hoof over the threshold, he'd jolly well get torn to pieces."

The throng jostled them as they stooped down to examine the workmanship of the heavy chain which was decorated with mysterious symbols, and neither noticed the hum of conversation become greater and more threatening in the street.

An Arab, whose dark, glowering eyes showed just above the chestnut-coloured burnous, or robe, that he wore, moved hurriedly past, and, with a swift movement, unseen by other passers-by, sent Tony staggering headlong under the chain into the forbidden courtyard!

Almost immediately, as it seemed, the voices of the mullahs, or priests, calling the faithful to prayer from the tops of the minarets, were drowned in an angry jabbering along the street. The Arab in the brown robe had mingled among the throng, and his voice was loudest in cursing the Feringhees who had defiled the sacred place!

"Who the thump did that?" demanded Tony, looking round as attendants of the mosque came hurrying across the courtyard. "Who the blazes gave me that biff in the back?"

Guy caught him roughly by the wrist.

"I'll swear I saw that same Arab I believed was following us," he whispered. "I don't like the look of things, old scout—there's a storm brewing, and we'd better set a course back to the residency—and lively!"

Neither of them could speak Arabic, although Guy had been swotting up the language from books. But it didn't need a knowledge of the lingo to understand that the Arabs near the mosque were in ugly mood.

Those who were near the gateway deliberately hustled and jostled the chums as they passed, but many in the street did not understand the reason for the sudden commotion, and again Guy glimpsed the Arab he had seen before, his brown robe drawn partly over his face, but his voice curiously penetrating as he inflamed the mob against the young Englishmen.

Once clear of the gateway, Guy and Tony walked sharply along the dusty street and thrust their way past those who, in uncertain fashion, tried to bar their path. But the mob at their heels grew greater and pressed them more closely.

A stone whistled past Tony's ear, struck a brass coffee-pot in a near-by shop, and rebounded with a metallic clang, and blows were aimed at them with fists and sticks.

"Wah, infidels! Feringhees!"

The uproar became greater, until the hot bazaars echoed and re-echoed with it. A young Arab fanatic, with a black fringe of mossy beard, snatched a curved Damascus blade from an armourer's shop and came leaping across the dusty road with it whirring over his head.

"Kafirs! Infidels!" he shrieked. "Kill the infidels!"

All around him rose the drum-like chant of his fellow Moslems roused to frenzy:

"La Illah ha il Illah ha!"

The Arab in the brown robe had set the spark to the gunpowder of their Eastern fanaticism, and now he was slipping away like a sinister shadow through the throng.

"Look out there!" Guy roared. "On your starboard beam, Tony!"

He himself was in the grasp of three or four Arabs and struggling to get free, and Tony swung round to see the young fanatic, with his blade shimmering like fire in the golden sunlight.

Roused to a frenzy approaching madness, the young Arab was out to earn the right of paradise with one stroke of the sword blade by killing an infidel! But before the sword could fall, Tony leaped under it like a tiger and hammered both fists in swift succession into the Arab's brown face, sending him rolling senseless among some offal at the roadside.

The crack of his knuckles on the man's jawbone coincided with a fresh uproar from the mob:

"Kill! Kill!"

Hot blooded, like most of their race, the Arabs were ready to tear these infidels limb from limb. Even those who had small idea what all the bobbery was about, caught the contagion and howled for blood as lustily as those who had seen Tony set foot across the sacred precincts of the mosque courtyard.

"Leg it, Tony!" Guy howled, tearing himself free from those about him. "Full-steam down that side street!"

Running like hunted deer, they darted among camels and astounded pedestrians who had no idea what the bother was about, intent only on getting back to the sanctuary of the consul's residence.

Headlong they dashed through a small square where a number of camels were kneeling and chewing the cud. It was really the courtyard of a caravanserai, or inn, and the howls of the pursuing mob startled the usually patient beasts into a panic.

In swift succession, they scrambled up and began plunging about with their loads, incidentally delaying part of the crowd, after the naval fellows had sprinted past.

"We've got to throw these howling bashi-bazooks off the scent!" Tony panted. "Hold it up, old man! Dodge round the next corner!"

They swerved like hares, hoping to throw the roaring mob off their track in the maze of narrow streets which formed the greater part of this Arab port. What, therefore, was their horror when they found they had run into a blind alley!

"Scuppered!" Tony gasped.

It was too late to turn back. Confronting them, less than fifty yards along the narrow thoroughfare, was a wall of dried mud, fully twenty feet high—a wall round the courtyard of another of the numerous mosques.

From astern arose in crescendo the voices of the crowd like great surf breaking on the rocks—a frenzied, fanatical mob which would tear them to pieces as an eager pack of hounds would destroy a spent fox!

(Guy and Tony are in a perilous position. It seems that only a miracle can save them from the fanatical Arabs! Don't miss next week's instalment of this powerful serial, whatever you do, chums!)

A ROGUE'S REMORSE!

(Continued from page 24.)

he wished fervently that the blow would fall at once, and end his suspense; then he desired passionately to put it off to the latest possible moment, as if every remaining hour at the school was precious.

But when the tap came at his door he shuddered, and felt that it was the end. He had no doubt that it was a summons to the Head.

"Come in!" he said, but his voice was a husky, strained whisper, barely audible to himself.

The knock was repeated.

"Come in!" called out Carne more clearly, and the door opened, and Harry Wharton stepped in.

Carne looked at him.

"The Head's sent you?" he asked.

"No!" answered Harry.

"Then what—" Carne broke off, staring at the junior. A bitter look came over his face. "Did you want to see me—down? Well, I'm down—down and out, if it's any pleasure to you." He waved his hand to the half-packed suitcase. "You can see I'm getting ready. Anything more you want?"

Wharton's look, as his eyes fixed on the white, strained face in the dusky firelight, was compassionate. The fellow had done evil; black and bitter evil; but he had suffered for it, and he had repented, and but for the juniors, he would have suffered for his repentance. Wharton had come there with good news for Carne of the Sixth, and he was glad that he had the good news to bring.

"I've got something to tell you, Carne," he said quietly. "You were afraid of Rackstraw because he tricked you into going to the races with him—and that photograph was enough to get you sacked—"

"You know all about it," jeered Carne.

"After you'd left him on the common, we handled the scoundrel," said the captain of the Remove.

"I gave him something to remember me by," muttered Carne. "I shall be glad to think of that, when I'm booted out of here."

"You're not going to be booted out," said Harry. "That's what I've come to tell you."

Carne stared at him.

"What do you mean?"

"So long as you were up against Tatters, we were up against you, and I've no doubt that we should have nailed you sooner or later," said Wharton. "But that's over now—you've broken with that villain, and Tatters has nothing more to fear from you."

BOOKS, PENKNIVES, and POCKET WALLETS, offered for storyettes and Greyfriars limericks. All efforts to be sent to:

c/o MAGNET,

5, Carmelite Street,

London, E.C.4 (Comp.).

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY OF WINNING SOMETHING USEFUL!

You played the game at the finish—and we're standing by you. We got that photograph away from Rackstraw, and destroyed it."

"Little enough use," said Carne. "He can take a hundred more from the same negative if he chooses—and he will choose."

"He had the negative on him," said Harry, "and we got that, too, and destroyed it."

Carne started.

"You—you mean—" His voice was cracked and husky.

"I mean that you've got nothing to fear from Rackstraw now," answered

Harry. "His teeth are drawn, so far as you are concerned. He cannot betray you to the Head without proof—and he has no proof now. Dr. Locke knows him to be a scoundrel, and he would not even listen to him. You are safe from him, Carne—you've nothing to fear."

Carne stood quite still.

His face was working. In the blackness of despair, the junior's words had brought hope to his heart.

"You—you're sure?" he breathed, at last.

"Quite sure."

"And—and you've done this for me, after—after—" Carne's voice cracked.

"After what I've done—"

"You've got another chance," said Harry. "You've faced the music—and done the right thing at the finish. Nobody wants to remember anything else against you, Carne. My friends and I will say nothing—Rackstraw can say nothing now—the thing's at an end. All you've got to do is to keep straight, and that ought to come pretty easy, after the experience you've had of the other thing. That's all, Carne."

Harry Wharton turned and left the study.

Carne of the Sixth was not "sacked." The chums of the Remove, whose enemy he had so long been, had saved him.

But he left the school the next day, on leave till the end of the term; and for long weeks he was not seen in his place in the Sixth.

It made little difference to Tatters and his friends; for present or absent, Carne was no longer the enemy of the Greyfriars tinker.

Rackstraw was still his enemy. But whether Rackstraw would venture to make another move against his rival for a fortune, after so many failures, it remained for the future to reveal.

THE END.

(Now look out for the next story in this grand series, entitled: "A KING-MAN'S TREACHERY!" Boys, you'll enjoy every line of it!)

STAMP FREE! WALLET

Fine Pocket Case fitted with linen shelves for Stamps, Perforation Gauge, etc., containing fine MINT CENTRAL AMERICAN STAMP CATALOGUE 7/6, gratis to applicants for my famous "BETTA" STAMP APPROVALS (4d. in 1/- Bonus to buyers) sending 3d. postage and packing only (Abroad 1/-). Finest Selection at Lowest Prices.

ALIX HARLAND, Dept. J.R., Philately House, 15, ST. BRIDE STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

BLUSHING.—FREE to all sufferers, particulars of a proved home treatment that quickly removes all embarrassment, and permanently cures blushing and flushing of the face and neck. Enclose stamp to pay postage to—Mr. A. TEMPLE (Specialist), Palace House, 128, Shaftesbury Avenue (2nd Floor), London, W.1. (Established over 25 years.)

BE TALL—Your Height increased in 14 days, or money back. Amazing Course, 5/-. Send STAMP NOW for Free Book.—STEBBING SYSTEM, 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

BLUSHING, Shyness, "Nerves," Self-consciousness cured or money back! Complete Treatment, 5/-. Details, striking testimonials, Free.—L.A. STEBBING, 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

300 STAMPS FOR 6d. (Abroad 1/-), including Airpost, Barbados, Old India, Nigeria, New South Wales, Gold Coast, etc.—W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, LYE, Stourbridge.

Call or write. Illustrated lists free



HOME CINEMATOGRAPHS FILMS AND ACCESSORIES.

PROJECTORS all prices from 5/- to £16.

Film Spools, Rewinders, Lighting Sets, Screens, Sprockets, etc.

FILMS ALL LENGTHS & SUBJECTS.

FORD'S (Dept. A.P.), 276/7, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

Sample Film 1/- and 2/6, post free.

SPURPROOF TENTS. Model O.



Made from lightweight proofed material. Complete with three-piece jointed poles, pegs, guy lines, and brown valise. Weight 5 lbs. Size 6 ft. 6 ins. x 4 ft. 6 ins. x 3 ft. 6 ins. **15/11** With 6 in. wall and 3 in. eave.

Accommodates three boys. Special extra lightweight. Made from Egyptian Cotton. Same size. Weight 3½ lbs. **19/6.**

Send for beautiful illustrated Camping List, post free.

GEO. GROSE & CO., 8, NEW BRIDGE STREET, E.C.4.

BE STRONG

I promise you Robust Health, Doubled Strength, Stamina, and Dashing Energy in 30 days or money back! My amazing 4-in-1 Course adds 10 ins. to your muscular development (with 2 ins. on Chest and 1 in. on Arms); also brings an Iron Will, Perfect Self-control, Virile Manhood, Personal Magnetism. Surprise your friends! Testimony FREE, or Complete Course 5/-.—STEBBING INSTITUTE (A), 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

GROW TALLER! ADD INCHES to your height. Details free.—JEDISON, 39, BOND STREET, BLACKPOOL.

BLUSHING, SHYNESS.—For FREE particulars simple home cure write Mr. HUGHES, 7, Southampton Row (Box 167), LONDON, W.C.1.

MAGIC TRICKS, etc.—Parcels, 2/6, 5/6. Ventriloquist's Instrument, Invisible, Imitate Birds. Price 6d. each, 4 for 1/-.—T. W. Harrison, 289, Pentonville Rd., London, N.1.

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

HEIGHT INCREASED. Complete course 5/-. Clients gain 1 to 5 ins. Particulars, testimonials free.—P. A. CLIVE, Harrocks, Colwyn Bay, N. Wales.

All applications for Advertisement Space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, UNION JACK SERIES, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

"BOY KING" AND TRIANGULAR PKT.

Contains over 110 different stamps. Pair world's youngest ruler, triangular, Cuba, Egypt, Argentine, many mint and Colonials. All free. Send 2d. postage only requesting approvals.—LISBURN & TOWNSEND, London Rd., Liverpool.

FREE

SWORD-SWALLOWER AND FIRE-EATER

Offers his services for the edification of spectators at fairs and fests, sports meetings, etc. Bound to attract! Causes lots of fun and amusement; cries of astonishment and roars of laughter guaranteed! Advance bookings now being made for the summer season. Why not brighten up your cricket in this simple way? For Sale of Charges, write: HAROLD SKINNER, Third and Laughter Specialist, Remove Passage.

The Greifians Herald

Edited by
HARRY WHARTON,
F.R.S.

LATEST EXTRA GOOD EDITION

FINE FEEDS FOR FAMISHED FELLOWS may be obtained at the Elysian Cafe, High Street, Courtfield. Full-course Dinner, 3/6. Skilled orchestras in attendance. Much your mutton-chops to the strains of merry music! Tackle tough joints to the tunes of Tannhäuser! Those who come once to the Elysian Cafe will repeat their visit scores of times.

ALLEGATION AGAINST COMMISSIONER-OF-POLICE

"THIRD DEGREE" METHODS Damages of One Thousand Doughnuts Claimed

SUSPECTED PERSON TORTURED



“What is the Third Degree?”

This question was asked by Mr. Justice Nugent during the hearing of an amazing case in the Gym Bench Division. The answer was supplied by the plaintiff in the case.

Mr. W. G. Bunter, humorously described as “gentleman,” brought an action against Commissioner-of-Police Johnny Bull, for assault and battery by members of the Remove Police Force. He alleged that after being arrested on a charge of being a suspected person, the police put him to torture, or in other words, gave him the Third Degree, with the object of wringing a confession from him. Damages of a thousand doughnuts were claimed.

Judge: Would you mind describing what form the alleged torture took?

Mr. Bunter: Certainly, Nugent, old chap—yarrrooh!

Plaintiff's evidence was interrupted here, by ushers knocking his head against the witness-box, and contempt by the Litigants Undue Familiarity Judge (seemly): Now get on with the washing!

Mr. Bunter: Oh! Well, anyway, what they did was this: They pummelled and punched me, brutally battered me, dragged me about by the ears and hair, and finally flogged me unmercifully with cricket stumps! Wow! It makes me shudder to think about it!

PSYCHO-ANALYST AT WORK IN THE REMOVE

Dr. Newland—Brain Reader.

“Doctor Newland, I believe?” and ungrammatically. “But I murmured the ‘Greifians are something more than a mere Herald.’”

Interviewer, as he entered the sumptuously-furnished consulting-room of the specialist who has created such a stir in Remove circles lately.

The dapper, piercing-eyed gentleman seated over an incense-burner, nodded.

“Jim him,” he replied, simply



“Exactly! Your ignorance not so terrible, after all! Not watch how I work!”

The “Greifians Herald” interviewer sat back, and watched as a portly patient whom he recognised as Mr. W. G. Bunter rolled in, wearing a look of wear on his full-moon face.

“I say, doctor, do you think you can do anything for me? I feel terrible depressed. Something seems to be worrying me—”

“Sit down, sir!” murmured Dr. Newland, in a silky voice. “And kindly say the first word that comes into your head after each word I say, myself. In this way, I will be able to read what is passing through your mind. Ready?”

Bunter nodded, and sank into his chair.

“Off we go, then!” said the psycho-analyst.

“Guh!” retorted Mr. Bunter.

“Footballs!” said Dr. Newland.

“Iced-Cake!” mumbled Mr. Bunter.

Dr. Newland started slightly.

“Boxing!” he said.

“Curry!” responded Mr. Bunter.

“Thees!”

“Rubbish!” was Mr. Bunter's surprising remark.

Dr. Newland's face grew grimmer.

“SCAVENGER!” he snipped.

“Soss!”

“Well-Fed!”

“Starved!” moaned Mr. Bunter.

Dr. Newland jumped to his feet with a yell.

“So you're the rotter that robbed my cupboard of the loaf cake! I was going to send to the Society for the Sons of Starved Scavengers, are you?” he roared.

“No wonder your conscience pricked you!”

“N-n-n-y hat!” stammered Mr. Bunter. “How—however did you guess that—here, what the thump—yarrrooh!”

“I—th u d l—‘cant’—thud!”

“I—‘guarantee to cure you’—thud!”

“but I'll jolly-well—thud!”

“do my best!” said Dr. Newland, talking running kicks at his patient all round the study. “By that time, it really looked as if Mr. Bunter was likely to remain completely cured!”

“So that's that!” remarked the Remove psycho-analyst, “What Mr. Bunter had gone, ‘Kor’ you see how I go to work! Would you like me to put you through a test on the same lines?”

“Thanks!” gasped the “Gy-frians Herald” interviewer. “I've suddenly remembered the prizefighters and a gangster, and I'd feel much sated with them!”

LAUGH AND GROW FAT.

SURPRISING CROSS-COUNTRY SPEED

AMAZING SEQUEL

Slacker's Sensational Victory MEDAL CONFISCATED

The Annual Paper-Chase was held this week. Bob Cherry and Mark Lintley starting out with the “scout” and the rest of the Remove following them up at various intervals, according to the classes' respective handicaps. The result provided quite a sensation, for the race was won by none other than Harold Skinner, the champion slacker and gay dog of the Form! The course was a difficult one, through ploughed fields, well-filled ditches, thick woods, and swift streams. There were several mishaps. Bunter made the mistake of running in the wrong direction, with the result that he disappeared into the School Tuckshop, and was



On the scent.

GREAT FAG STRIKE AVERTED.

Fag Masters Breathe Again REBELS FIGHT REBELS

Fag-masters, rejoice! Statoly seniors, sing a song of thankfulness! Your least will continue to be scoured to a cinder and your tea stewed from lime immemorial. For the great Fag Strike, threatened for to-morrow, will definitely not take place!

Behind this announcement (wires our Special Representative from the Third Form room) is a story of intrigue and conspiracy unparalleled in the history of Greifians. Tubb, of the Third, was the originator of the movement. Tubb's argument was that if the Remove didn't fag, why should the Third? The idea of attempting to compare the ink-stained, jam-smeard nonentities of the Third with the mighty and enlightened gentlemen of the Remove may well bring a smile to the faces of most Greifians now. But in the Third, Tubb's futile argument passed for logic, with the result that the wooden-headed leader of the fags had no difficulty in getting recruits for his strike movement. The movement was quickly organised, secret meetings held in dark corners of the Third Form room, and plans prepared.

It was decided to strike suddenly, and without warning, so that a paralyzing blow might be dealt at the essential services—toast-making, tea-brewing, and shopping. Only the vaguest rumours reached the public, and the strikers' aims, therefore, looked like being accomplished. Fortunately for Greifians, something happened in time to avert the calamity.

That something was Nugent minor, of the Second. Young Dicky got wind of what was happening, and immediately decided that if the Third were not to fag, there was no earthly reason why the Second should fag, either! He therefore called on Tubb, and the following conversation took place:

“Hear you're going to kick against fagging, Tubby?”

“Don't you call me ‘Tubby’! Young Nugent!”

“Young yourself! Well, we'll join you, anyway!”

“You won't! Who the thump's going to do the fagging, if you don't?”

“So you think you're going to push it all on to us, eh? Rats to that, anyway!”

“Yah! I!”

At this point, the two young statesmen decided



Fags in conflict.

to argue on more forcible lines, and a blood-thirsty scrap ensued, Nugent minor, being eventually defeated and slung back into his own quarters.

To avenge the insult, the Second immediately made a raid on the Third Form room. After a fierce battle, the casualties on both sides were numerous that the respective leaders decided to postpone the strike.

Next day, the Third made a raid on the Second Form room, and after emerging victorious, proclaimed the strike for the following day.

Unfortunately the Second had recovered sufficiently by that time to return the compliment and make another raid on the Third Form room. So the strike was again put back.

Nugent minor then decided to declare a Second Form strike. The plans for this, however, were upset by another Third Form raid which incapacitated half the Second.

Before Tubb had time to lead out his rebels in his strike there was yet another raid by the Second. So a fresh postponement was again ordered.

Up to the time of going to press, twenty-five separate strikes have been declared, and each has been called off owing to a fresh outbreak of war. Political observers say that, by the time hostilities cease, the world-be strikers will probably be seniors themselves, with fags of their own! By that time, it will presumably be too late to call a strike! So once more—Fag masters, rejoice!

“As a matter of fact, I'm a psycho-analyst—pronounced ‘syco.’ Which means—”

“That you unravel people's brains, and find out what's troubling 'em?”

(Continued in next column.)